

# Midwest Folklore

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# Midwest Folklore

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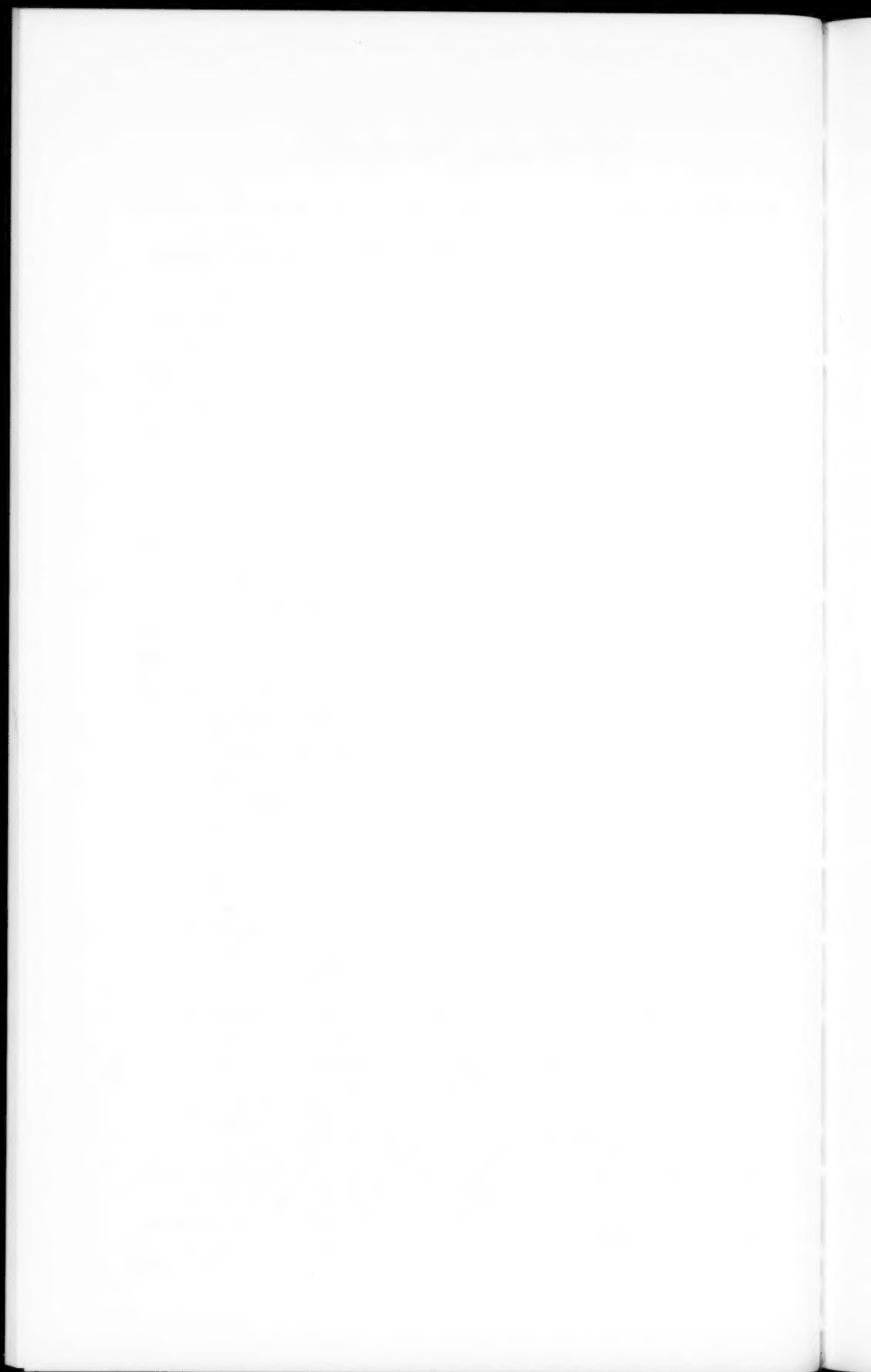
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BY BRIAN SUTTON-SMITH  
*Bowling Green State University*

## THE KISSING GAMES OF ADOLESCENTS IN OHIO

THERE DO NOT appear to be any English language folklore collections which include kissing games within one special category. In general, these games are to be found under the titles of "Courtship" "Marriage" "Forfeits" and "Play-Party" games. In this century, however, the explicit and formalized elements of courtship, marriage, forfeiture and play-party dancing have been practically discarded in adolescent play, while kissing has continued and increased in importance as a formal element in many games. The primary aim of the present study, therefore, is to record a collection of the contemporary kissing games of adolescent children. Subsidiary aims are to note the origins of these games and the reasons for the changes that have come about in the way in which they are played.

## METHOD

Games, game descriptions and accounts of the circumstances of play were collected by questionnaire from 246 children (135 boys and 111 girls) in a northwestern Ohio rural high school (Sandusky County), and from 100 college students (50 men and 50 women) in a state university also in northwestern Ohio (Wood County). The high school children were in the fifth to twelfth grade classes with approximately thirty children in each class. The college students were mainly sophomores of eighteen and nineteen years of age. The items in the questionnaire are those listed in the table. These items were derived from previous lists made out by the college students. High school and college students were requested to check only those games that they had played themselves, indicating whether or not they liked or disliked the game. The great majority of these students came from towns in Ohio.

The games appeared in the questionnaire list as follows:

Kiss in the Ring	L	D
Post Office	L	D

The percentage of each group, high school and college students checking the games and the rank order of preference is indicated in the table. This table includes only the twenty-two games listed on the original questionnaire. It does not include the thirty-two other game names discovered in the course of the investigation. These are mentioned in the alphabetical collection below. All of these games have been played at sometime during the 1950's. A smaller group of students in another rural high school also contributed descriptions of some of their games.

TABLE

Name of Game	Rank Order in High School Gp. (N=246)	Percentage of High School Gp. check. item	Rank Order in College Group (N=100)	Percentage of Coll. Gp. check- ing Item
Spin the Bottle	1	57	1	91
Post Office	2	38	5	70
Winks	3	32	12	23
Mistletoe Kissing	4	26	3	83
Chew String	5	25	10	34
Necking	6	22	2	89
Biting the Apple	7.5	21	11	25
Truth and Consequences	7.5	21	13	22
Endurance Kissing	9.5	20	9	39

Flashlight	9.5	20	7	49
Hayride Kissing	11	18	6	69
Passing the Orange	12	17	8	45
Musical Circle	13	14	15.5	9
Kissing Tag	14.5	13	15.5	9
Chase and Kiss	14.5	13	17.5	8
Perdiddle	16	12	4	72
Numbers	17.5	10	17.5	8
Kiss in the Ring	17.5	10	19	6
Sardines	19	7	20	5
Clap In, Clap Out	20	6	21.5	0
This or That	21	5	14	10
Minx	22	4	21.5	0

### THE COLLECTION

The games collected are listed alphabetically below. Where there is more than one name for the game, the description of the game is given under that name most commonly used. Some of the following games are played more often without kissing but are included here because kissing is occasionally a part of the game. Games of this nature are "Chew the String" and "Pass the Orange." There are other games which do not contain kissing, but for which much of the fun consists in the close contact of the partners, and the near kissing they experience, for example "Biting the Apple" and "Pass the Lifesaver."

When the information was derived from the major high school sample this is indicated by the reference in parentheses to "Thompson." Descriptions derived from the minor high school sample are indicated by the reference "Woodville." References to other places in Ohio or elsewhere indicate that the information was derived from the college sample. Where the game was reported by only one person and is probably an ephemeral pastime, this is indicated. It will be noticed that while the majority of the games have not appeared before in earlier collections, some elements of most of them are traceable to earlier games.

### BASE KISS

The boy stands on the pitcher's base. He covers his eyes. The girls run from the home base around the diamond. When he shouts out "base" they must stop. If any girl is on a base he kisses her. This also is called "Baseball Kissing" (Thompson). This appears to be a unique adaptation of baseball to more romantic ends.

### *BITING THE APPLE*

This is a relay race in which couples compete against couples. The apples hang from the roof on a piece of string and the couples, hands behind their backs, endeavor to be the first to get the apple eaten. It is played throughout the year although some still report it as played only at Halloween which is the traditional time for it (Toledo).<sup>1</sup> "Kissing occurs only by accident and is something to avoid" (Swanton). The game may be played also with doughnuts (Rossford) or candy bars (Southington).

### *BOYS CATCH GIRLS*

There are two sides. The ones who are caught are kissed. The boys may catch the girls or the girls may catch the boys (Thompson). Informal activity of this type appears to be practically universal throughout the Western World. I have observed it most often in eight and nine-year-old children, but it is certainly not restricted to that age level. Children often engage in activities of this sort without giving a name to them.

### *BRIDGE*

This is played the same way as Perdiddle, but bridges are used instead of motor car headlights. Naturally, this has the effect of increasing the number of occasions on which the game may be played (Thompson).

### *CANDY, CIGARETTES*

Girls and boys in two teams take the names of say, cigarettes (boys) candy (girls). Each group then takes turns at calling out any example of the category of nomenclature chosen by the opposite sex ("Lucky Strike"). If this happens to be someone's name, that person is kissed (Industry, Penn.) This is one of a group of games which emphasize the chance element in the selection of partners. Other games of this sort which follow are: "Draw and Kiss," "Dynamite," "Five Minute Date," "Heavy Heavy Hang Over the Head," "Musical Circle," "Numbers," "Post Office," "Professor," "Spin the Bottle" and "This or That." There is precedent for this chance selection of partners in traditional games.<sup>2</sup>

### *THE CARD GAME*

This game is known also as Hearts (Cleveland). The players go round in a circle, and take turns to pick a card from a pack. Having picked

a card they then pick a person of the opposite sex. If they pick a spade they slap the person they have chosen on the back. If a club, they shake hands. If a diamond it is a public kiss. If a heart, a private kiss (Woodville). There are variations in the interpretation of these suits. From the same locality, for example, another version was: club=slap; spade=shake hands; heart=kiss in public; diamond=kiss in private. Yet another interpretation from Cleveland had it that a club=a kiss on the hand; a diamond=a kiss on the forehead; a spade=a kiss on the cheek; and a heart=a kiss on the lips. Here again we have a game which emphasizes the fortuitous choice of partners although the "chance" element is here provided by a pack of cards, rather than some traditional game performance. The game of "Hearts," and "Kings and Queens" are of the same sort.

#### CHASE

The girls snatch the boys' hats and in order to get them back the boys have to kiss the girls (Ohio).

#### CHASE AND KISS

One person sits on a chair, all the rest take numbers (odd for boys, even for girls). The person on the chair calls out two numbers (an odd and an even). If a girl on the chair, then the boy called out tries to kiss her before he is kissed by the girl whose number was also called. If he succeeds he takes the player's place on the chair. If he fails and is kissed first, then the chair player calls out again (Monclova). There are traditional games which are similar to this, all involving couples who chase each other for kisses.<sup>3</sup>

#### CHEW THE STRING

This is a relay race in which couples compete against each other. There is a long piece of string. The partners chew from each end until they meet in the middle. In most cases this is simply a race to see which couple can get all the string out of sight first. But it may be played to see who can be first to eat a lifesaver (Summit, N. J.) or marshmallow (Thompson) in the middle. Or it may be a race to see which partner can eat the most (Whittier, Cal.). In some cases the partners are reported as finishing the ordeal with a rather clumsy kiss (Celina, Cincinnati, Chicago, Dayton, Portage).

*CLAP IN, CLAP OUT*

No description reported in this research but it is a traditional game frequently mentioned in the literature.<sup>4</sup>

*CHOO CHOO*

This is a variant of "Pony Express." A couple go into another room. They ask a third person to join them. These three then run all around the house like a train. When they stop in the secluded room, the first kisses the second, who kisses the third. A fourth person is asked to join them and the game proceeds as before and so it goes on with chain kissing at the end of each episode. The train alternates boys and girls. When the last person is chosen, and the kissing commences, the second to the last person instead of kissing the final player, gives him a slap (Ohio). This victimization of a player also occurs in "Pony Express" and is a familiar element in children's games.<sup>5</sup> Players holding on behind each other is of course familiar in "Fox and Goose."<sup>6</sup>

*DRAW AND KISS*

All the player's names are placed in a dish. All the players place their hands in together and draw a name. They must kiss the name drawn out as well as be kissed by the person who has drawn their name. As soon as they have kissed and been kissed they may run to take their place in a line of chairs. There is one chair short, and the person who is left over must kiss everyone (Thompson). This game, which appears to be a new one, combines elements of "Musical Chairs" and "Forfeits."<sup>7</sup>

*DYNAMITE*

All the boys leave the room. Each girl selects a magazine and lays it on the floor. There are several magazines placed on the floor but belonging to no one. These are known as "dynamite." The boys come in one at a time and step on a magazine. If they step on one belonging to someone, they must kiss that person. If they step on one belonging to no one, then dynamite—they must kiss everyone in the room. Sometimes a small magazine is placed inside a large magazine. If someone steps on these, they have a double dynamite, kissing everyone twice (Ohio).

Like the traditional game of "Clap In, Clap Out" and the game of "Winks" this is a game so contrived to make the boys play out their choices in front of the girls.

### ENDURANCE KISSING

This has been reported as a game played by a few couples together, or by a group of couples at a party. It is essentially a comical endurance test, in which a couple sees how long they can hold a kiss without breathing. A watch is used. The bystanders laugh at the competitors. It is done usually only with one's steady date. On a double date the losers might be expected to buy a coke for the winners. The endurance kissing may also occur with breathing allowed, in which case it is a contest to see which couple can keep their mouths together for the longest period of time. Under the name "Football" it is described as follows: "About three or four couples would start kissing at the same time and the couple who held out the longest would score a touchdown. They would then go for the extra point, gaining this by again out-enduring their competitors. If a game was played for long a score would be kept. Sometimes a couple could hold out for 45 minutes" (Burgoon).

### FIDDLE DIDDLE

This is another name for the game of "Perdiddle" (Woodville).

### FIVE MINUTE DATE

One player sits on a chair blindfolded. On each side of him sits a member of the opposite sex. He takes their hands in his, and drops the one he doesn't want. He takes off his blindfold and goes on a five minute date with the one he has chosen (Woodville). The blindfolding of the players who must then exercise a guess is a familiar element in games.<sup>8</sup>

### FLASHLIGHT

This is known also under the names of "Willpower" and "Spotlight." The game is played in a number of different ways. In the most common, couples sit around the edge of a dark room. One person sits in the center with a flashlight. If he flashes it onto a couple that is *not* kissing, then he joins the opposite sex member of that couple, and the other member takes his place in the center with the flashlight. In only one or two reports did the It character in the center escape his position because he found a peripheral couple that *was* kissing. In short it was normal in this game to be kissing, not normal to be caught unembraced. In another type of flashlight game the central character is blindfolded. He is then spun around. When his



light falls on someone, if it is a person of the opposite sex, she kisses him. If a person of the same sex, he is spun again. If he can guess who it is that has kissed him, he may leave the center. If not the game continues as before.

This is clearly a new game, but even so contains several elements that are quite traditional. It is very normal in the It games of adolescence for the central person to be a left-over character or scapegoat.<sup>9</sup> He is like the "Jolly Miller" who can't get himself a wife.<sup>10</sup> It is traditional too for a torch to be a dangerous possession.<sup>11</sup>

### *FOOTBALL*

Another name for "Endurance Kissing."

### *FREEZE TAG*

"When the It kisses you, you stay frozen to the spot and cannot move until some other player comes and unfreezes you with a kiss" (Thompson). This is a variant of the well known chasing game of the same name.

### *HAYRIDE KISSING*

In most cases hayrides are occasions which may or may not include kissing, not strictly speaking a game in themselves. For example, there are reports of playing "Flashlight" and "Endurance Kissing" while out on hayrides. However, there is at least one report of kissing proceeding sequentially around the conveyance in the order of sitting (Rockford).

### *HEARTS*

All players have cards and take turns at turning them up. If hearts are matched the two players involved kiss while the light is turned out momentarily (Erie, Penn.).

### *HEAVY, HEAVY, HANG OVER THE HEAD*

An object is taken from each player as a means of identification. These objects are put in an ash tray and held over the head of a person called the teacher. The holder lifts out an object and indicates whether it belongs to a boy or girl.

Holder: "Heavy Heavy hang over the head. What should this boy do to get back his ring"

Teacher: "He must sit on the couch with ..... and kiss her every-time I tell him to do so" (Rossford).



In a briefer version, everyone simply puts object in a hat, takes out an object and kisses the owner (Cleveland). This is a classic element in "Forfeits."<sup>12</sup>

### *KINGS AND QUEENS*

Children stand in a circle around a deck of cards. One by one they turn up the cards. If a girl turns up a king she may choose a boy and go off into another room with him. If a boy turns up a queen he goes into another room with his choice (Willoughby).

### *KISSING TAG*

This game is also called "Kissing Tab" (Woodville).

The person who is It catches and kisses someone who is then It and must also pass it on by kissing (Lorain). In another game with the same name a person in the center is blindfolded. The others circle around him. When he calls "Kissing Tag" he chases the others, and the person he catches he kisses for five minutes (Thompson). These are again variations on the traditional games of "Chase" and "Blind-man's Buff."

### *KISS UNDER WATER*

Players try to kiss each other while swimming under water. One report only (Woodville).

### *MINX*

One player is It and tries to catch the other players without their fingers, arms or legs crossed. If the It so catches anyone he "minxes" that person which means simply he kisses them, and that person takes his place in the center (Ohio). This crossing of fingers, limbs, etc. is a common way in which children symbolize being "safe" in game terms.<sup>13</sup> Safety tag games are numerous.

### *MISTLETOE KISSING*

A Christmas and New Year custom, not usually regarded as a game, but made into one in some cases. For example, the mistletoe is hung in the doorway under which the couples march. The couple under the mistletoe when the whistle blows must kiss (Fostoria). There are reports in which boys struggled to drag girls under the mistletoe in order to kiss them, or took the mistletoe to the girls and held it over their heads as a pretext for kissing them (Lorain, Anna).

### *MURDERER AND DETECTIVE*

Two versions are mentioned. One person is appointed the detective and he leaves the room. Another is appointed the murderer, but the detective does not know who this child is. The lights are turned out and the murderer kisses someone. The detective is called in and he must guess the name of the murderer (Woodville). This is a kissing version of another game of the same name.<sup>14</sup> In another variety, the game has a "Spin the Bottle" pattern. Someone spins the bottle. The person it points to becomes the detective. The detective spins the bottle. If it points to a person of the opposite sex, that person is a murderer. The detective then chases the murderer and attempts to kiss her (Woodville).

### *MUSICAL CIRCLE*

The boys are in a circle and the girls form a circle around them. The music is played and the boys walk around; when it stops, they kiss the girl facing them (Ohio). Circle forms of courting games were common in earlier days, though not this particular form.<sup>15</sup>

### *NECKING*

This is not normally considered a game, but in some reports elements of ritual show up that approximate it to play. "This was done in a car at some spot well frequented by teenagers. One of our favourite spots was the Pumping Station overlook, Presque Isle Bay on Lake Erie. Our favorite expression at that time was that we were going to watch the 'submarine races'." Or, "We usually went to the park that closed at 11 p.m. But soon the park police found out and would quietly pull up along side the car and shine their spotlight on you. Then it became a fad to be caught necking like this. Many times a bunch of us would park the car and just wait for the police. When they pulled up and shone their flashlights we would just sit there laughing" (Cleveland).

### *NUMBERS*

A boy or girl goes into another room which is in the dark. This is preferably a bedroom. The members of the opposite sex are assigned numbers. The first person calls out a number and the chosen one enters the room and "necks" for a period of one minute. The same number cannot be called for more than three times. When all numbers have been called, a member of the opposite sex goes into the room (Dayton).

*PASS THE KISS*

Players stand in a circle and pass around a kiss (Thompson). A traditional form though usually it is a whisper or a button that is passed round the periphery.<sup>16</sup>

*PASS THE LIFESAVER*

A relay or couple game in which each player holds a toothpick in the mouth, and then players endeavor to pass the lifesaver from one toothpick to another without dropping it. A game which brings faces into proximity though it does not necessarily result in kissing (Elmore).

*PASS THE ORANGE*

This is usually played as a relay. The orange is placed under the chin and then the next player, a member of the opposite sex endeavors to get it under his chin without use of hands (Berea). Or it may be played with the members of each sex alternating around in a circle (Lorain). In another version the partners stand with faces close together with the orange supported between their foreheads. The competition is to see which couple can keep it there the longest (Warren). In a number of reports the couple must kiss if they drop the orange while passing it from one chin to the next (Poland, Cleveland, Westlake). In one, they kiss if they pass it on successfully (Green Bay, Wis.).

*PERDIDDLE*

This game is known also as "Fiddle Diddle," "Popeye" and "Rinky Dink." A boy and girl are riding in an automobile. If a car with one light goes by, then if the boy says "perdiddle" first he can claim a kiss from the girl. "It used to give us the nerve to take a kiss," says one report (Middletown). But if the girl sees the light first and says "perdiddle" she can slap the boy. It is played in other ways also. Sometimes the couples save up their "perdiddles" throughout the evening and have a reckoning before departure. "In this way we didn't get all messed up on our way to the function" (Findlay). Other versions ignore the slapping and either partner may take a kiss when the one light provocation appears (Toledo, Elmore). According to some, a truck light is good for an extra long kiss (Berea).

*PHOTOGRAPHY*

"The lights are turned out to see what develops" (Findlay). This is just a pretext for kissing between couples in the group setting. How-

ever, as such it is a more obvious example of a characteristic of so many of these games.

### *PONY EXPRESS*

This is similar to the game of "Choo Choo." A boy leads a girl out, with her hands on his waist, into a secluded and darkened room and kisses her. They return and a second boy couples on behind the girl. They depart once more, and once again the first boy kisses the first girl, and she turns and slaps the second boy. They return to the group and a second girl couples on behind the second boy. A kisses B, B kisses C and C slaps D. And on the game goes until all are kissed. The pairs are usually made up of couples going steady with each other. There is much laughter, astonishment and some annoyance (Bascom). It is reported also as being the same game as "Post Office" but played much faster (Woodville). In addition there is an expression relating to this game, which is not actually a game in itself, but rather game-like in that it has become a conventional smart saying. The question is asked:

"Do you want to play 'Pony Express'?"

"What is that?"

"The same as 'Post Office,' but a little more horsing around" (Thompson).

### *POPEYE*

Another name for "Perdiddle" (Painesville).

### *POST OFFICE*

There are several versions. One is similar to those found in the collections of traditional games.<sup>17</sup> In this version there is a player in another room (the postman) who sends a message via the intermediary that he has a letter for such and such a person. He may nominate the value of the letter, that it has a three-cent stamp or a six-cent stamp etc., and this is meant to indicate the number of kisses he intends to give that person. The elected person goes to the postmaster, kisses, and then replaces him as postmaster (Newton Falls). In another version, more frequently reported, the boys choose odd numbers and the girls choose even numbers, or vice versa. The postman then calls out any number without knowing who has that number. They kiss, and the number called becomes the new postmaster (Toledo, Oregon, Poland, Industry, Penn.). In yet other versions, the postman writes a number (one to five) on a piece of paper.

The girl who guesses his number kisses him that many times (Toledo). Or the postman is out of sight and the opposite sex persons do not know who it is. They come one at a time and ask for a given number of stamps. They get that many kisses (Cleveland). Or the couples simply line up and have turns at going into another room to kiss for one minute (Vienna). In a number of reports there was indication that the rules were not well known and the many variations in the game seems to confirm that position. It is of interest that the main change from the traditional to the modern form is from an explicit selection of partners to kiss, to a chance selection. Most versions, however, retain the private kissing, and the giving of the couple a limited time to go ahead with it, say, one or two minutes. If they take longer there will be much banter and laughter when they finally appear. "Usually after the first kiss the couple sat on the edge of the bed and made the springs squeak. This was always a big hit with those in the other room when it could be heard" (Ohio). The expression "Dog Sled" is used in connection with this game.

"Do you want to play 'Dog Sled?'"

"What is that?"

"The same as 'Post Office,' only a little more mush" (Thompson).

#### *PRETTY PLEASE*

This is more of a ritual than a game. Every time the boy says, "Pretty Please" to his girl she must kiss him. One report only (Thompson).

#### *PROFESSOR*

Numbers are written on pieces of paper, then cut in two. The boys receive one half, the girl the other half. Players see if they can match their pieces. Those whose papers match go to some private place to kiss. After they have kissed, the boy says to the girl, "Do I pass?" If she liked the kissing she says, "No," and he continues to kiss her until she says he passes (Thompson).

#### *RINKY DINK*

Another name for "Perdiddle" (Ginn).

#### *SARDINES*

One couple goes and hides, then another couple finds them and hides in the same place; in the end everyone is hiding together. This game can be played with or without kissing, though usually it is played without kissing.<sup>18</sup>

*SERVE IT IN THE DARK*

"The boy should raise her chin to the right level, then bake her in the young man's arms for fifteen minutes, and finally beat it before her old man gets home." One report only (Thompson).

*SHOW KISS*

A boy and a girl go to a movie which is according to this report a "Love Show." Every time the screen characters kiss, the boy and girl kiss too. Only one report (Thompson).

*SPIN THE BOTTLE*

All versions have the traditional circle of players with one player in the center spinning the bottle, though in two reports it was a flashlight in the center with the room in darkness<sup>19</sup> (Toledo, Poland). Generally, the center player must kiss the peripheral player pointed out by the bottle. Usually the kissing is done in public, but the couple may go off and do it in private (Payne, Lancaster). If it points to a player of the same sex that player may go into the center, or it may be spun again, or the person to the right may be kissed, or this situation may be avoided by having two sexually segregated circles with an opposite-sex person spinning the bottle. Usually, however, the sexes alternate around the circle. Sometimes when the bottle points between two of them, those two have to kiss (Chicago). There is much report of pretending to avoid the bottle, and of cheating so that it ended up pointing toward the pretty or the handsome, and not towards the unattractive. This is an interesting application of the sociometric determination of game behaviors first described by Whyte.<sup>20</sup>

*SPOTLIGHT*

Another name for "Flashlight" (Thompson). But used also for the practice of shining a spotlight on a group of dancing couples. The couple on whom the spot alights must stop dancing and kiss.

*THIS OR THAT*

One child goes out of the room. Two other children of the opposite sex are named "This" and "That." The outside child returns and nominates "This" or "That," without knowing who they are, and kisses the one he thus ignorantly chooses. The other child ("This" or "That"), then goes out and the game carries on (Upper Sandusky). In another similar version a girl goes into another dark room; a

person who has been out before names two boys "This" and "That." The girl outside calls back, "This" (or "That") and the person named goes into the room with her. She can kiss him if she likes or she can shake hands with him if she doesn't want to kiss him. She comes back and he remains behind. The process is repeated. However, if the boy tries to shake hands with a girl, she can either shake hands with him or slap his face (Upper Sandusky).

Games of fortuitous choice like this have forerunners in traditional game collections.<sup>21</sup>

### TRUTH OR CONSEQUENCES

An It person asks embarrassing questions of group members in turn. If the member will not tell the truth, then he must take the consequences. Questions asked are of the nature of: "Do you like Johnny?" Whether he or she is telling the truth depends upon group decision. Consequences vary. They may involve kissing, singing a song, proposing, running around the block etc. (Rossford).<sup>22</sup>

### TURTLE CLIMB

One member of the couple starts telling the story of how the poor little turtle tried to climb the hill. He uses his arms to demonstrate the turtle climbing. When the turtle finally reaches the top, the two arms are clear around the partners neck. The person narrating says: "What are we talking about turtles for?" and gives the other a kiss. One report only (Findlay).

### WILLPOWER

Another name for "Flashlight." But used also for a pursuit type of "Flashlight." There are several versions. In one, the person with the flashlight comes into a dark room, turns on his flashlight and kisses the person upon whom it alights, if of the opposite sex (Newton Falls). In another version, the boys as a group have flashlights and they pursue the girls who hide. They kiss the girl whom they catch in their light beam (Toledo, Dayton), or they stay with the girl they catch in the light beam (Willoughby).

### WINDSHIELD WIPER

Two couples stand with the same sexes opposite each other, and arms about each others shoulders or waists. They turn heads from side to side like windshield wipers, kissing as they do so. One report only (Cleveland).



## WINKS

This game is known also as "Popeye" (Chicago). Members of one sex, more usually the boys, stand in a circle behind chairs, all of which contain girls, except one. The boy with the empty chair tries to entice the girls in the other chairs to come over to his chair. They may come only if he winks at them. When he winks they try to rush over to his chair, but the boy behind them tries to prevent them from doing this by taking hold of their shoulders and arms, or perhaps simply by tagging them. There may be no kissing. More usually they are kissed by the boy who has winked at them when they succeed in getting to his chair. Occasionally they are also kissed by the boy behind them when he succeeds in holding them (Upper Sandusky). This is a traditional game.<sup>23</sup>

## CIRCUMSTANCES OF PLAY

For the purposes of this discussion the games are grouped into three sections:

I. *Chasing Kiss Games; which includes, "Base Kiss," "Boys Catch Girls," "Chase," "Chase and Kiss," "Freeze Tag," and "Kiss in the Ring."*

The first group of games are most typical of the preadolescent age group of thirteen years. This investigation did not provide much information about these games except that they are mostly played out of doors or in school grounds, and are limited to small numbers of children. That is, many children do not mention them. The games are mentioned mainly by the high school sample and there is some evidence that rural children are sometimes precocious in these respects.<sup>24</sup> Kinsey-type data would lead to the hypothesis that this sort of precocious aggressive osculatory play would be more marked amongst lower class children.<sup>25</sup> However, this thesis requires further investigation.

II. *Mixing Kiss Games: which include: (a) "Candy-Cigarettes," "Card Game," "Clap In Clap Out," "Draw and Kiss," "Dynamite," "Five Minute Date," "Hearts," "Kings and Queens," "Heavy Heavy Hang Over the Head," "Minx," "Murder & Detective," "Numbers," "Post Office," "Spin the Bottle," "This or That," "Truth or Consequences," "Winks." (b) "Bite the Apple," "Chew String," "Musical Circle," "Pass the Lifesaver," and "Pass the Orange."*

The mixer games of group II (a) are the kissing games of the junior high school period. The games of group (b) are played at



the junior high school age level, at the senior high school age level and by older persons. They are frequently reported as games played on fraternity-sorority visits. Their main appeal is their ludicrous nature. In all the games of group II the couples are not paired off before the game begins; pairing occurs in the games but it is characteristically of a momentary sort.

III. *Couple Kiss Games:* which include (a) "Choo Choo," "Flashlight," "Hayride Kissing," "Mistletoe Kissing," "Pass the Kiss," "Photography," "Pony Express," "Sardines," "Spotlight," "Willpower," (b) "Bridge," "Endurance Kissing," "Necking," "Perdiddle," "Pretty Please," "Serve it in the Dark," "Show Kiss," "Turtle Climb," "Windshield Wipers."

The couple games of group III are most characteristic of the senior high school years. Here the couples are usually matched off beforehand and the games permit them to continue their interest in each other. Type (a) are games played at group events such as parties. Type (b) usually take place amongst a few couples or between one couple in a motor car or other suitable place.

A child's experience of these games may be extensive or limited. There are varying degrees of acquaintance and varying types of occasions on which the games are played. Some of the varieties of experience are as follows: (1) There are those who have never played these games. In the high school group 42% of the children did not check any games in grades 5, 6, and 7. From the 8th grade on, however, only 8% failed to check any items. In short while most children have some experience of these games during childhood, a small minority records no experience of them. One informant explained that he had attended a boys' boarding school and was unacquainted with these games. (2) A few explained that they had never played games like "Spin the Bottle" and "Post Office" on formal occasions, but had played them clandestinely in the daytime out of doors, or inside only when their parents were absent from home. (3) A considerable group indicated having played the games only occasionally at birthday or New Years parties, or, for example, in a recreation hall when a school picnic had been abandoned because of wet weather. On these occasions adults were usually supervising the games. (4) For another considerable group these games constituted an important part of their social life throughout the high school years. These are the children who report playing these games at all their regular parties, which might be held every few weeks, on birthday parties, class parties, or following special occasions such as football games, music recitals, shows, plays, or as a precursor to slumber parties. The games

generally took place in a recreation room or basement; but only occasionally out of doors in a backyard. Parents were generally in the house but not directly supervising activities. A game like "Spin the Bottle" might go on for over an hour, before another of a similar nature such as "This or That" was taken up. One report mentions a father who took motion films of the activities then showed them at the next meeting of the group. Although the evidence is not clear cut, it seems probable that more frequent participation in these activities is a part of an upper-middle socioeconomic course of events.<sup>26</sup>

#### ORIGINS

The basic collections of Gomme and Newell demonstrate that in the nineteenth century, kissing occurred mostly in the games of marriage, courtship and lovemaking, or in their play-party equivalents. "Forty years ago half the play-party amusements were built about some ceremony for kisses."<sup>27</sup> The above alphabetical list contains no games of that sort with the exception perhaps of "Kiss in the Ring." Examination of the present collection shows that it is composed largely of what Gomme termed "Forfeits and Amusements." Yet kissing was not as typical of the forfeits and amusements cited by Gomme as it is of these games as played today. Gomme classifies sixteen games as forfeits, and kissing occurs in only two of them. Furthermore, the kissing in Gomme's games was more often a penalty than it is today. "I command yee to kiss the crook . . . his naked lips must kiss the sooty implement."<sup>28</sup> For the greater part the forfeit games of today do not contain very unpleasant consequences; at the worst a slap ("Perdiddle" and "Pony Express"). Newell supplies stronger precedent for the present position when he says, under the heading "Redeeming Forfeits":

The following are examples of old penalties, which usually involved kissing, with infinite variety of method: *To go to Rome.* To kiss every girl in the room. *Flat-irons.* The lad and lass lay their hands on the wall and kiss. *Measuring yards of tape, and cutting it off.* To kiss with arms extended. *"I'm in the well."* *"How Many Fathoms Deep?"* (Any number is answered.) *"Whom will you have to take you out?"* (Someone in the company is named.)<sup>29</sup>

Each fathom represents a kiss. The basic inventiveness in these expressions is very near in kind to that in our alphabetical list above. The rather surprising way in which so many games have been turned to kissing purposes in the above collection was clearly forecast in this record published by Newell in 1883.

Analysis of the formal pattern of the marriage games of yesterday in one of the most comprehensive collections<sup>30</sup> shows that the com-

monest procedure was for the central player to choose the partner that he would kiss. That is, at the end of an appropriate verse, the player in the center of the dancing circle, chose a player from the periphery, kissed him and was then replaced by that person in the center. Yet in the largest number of forfeit games of today, and those played most frequently [the mixer group II (a)] the choice of kissing partner is made fortuitously.

In short, two major changes have occurred in kissing games. First kissing takes place in forfeit type games rather than in marriage games. Secondly, it takes place less often by the explicit choice of one person for another and more often by chance. Some of the reasons that can be advanced to explain these changes are as follows. The first change is due to the fact that modern parents and the church are no longer averse to the fiddle and no longer restrict their children to the play-party game; it is due to the rise of the modern dance; to the fact that forfeit and amusement games are still as suitable to the indoor parlor and party setting as they were in the last century; to the large amount of freedom given modern children to develop these games in accordance with their own interests. The second change from choice of kissing partner to chance allotment of kissing partner, is probably due to the fact that the play-party games of yesterday were designed to suit late adolescence (although they were played by younger children also). An older age group is certainly implied in Dulles' statement. "The violin (fiddle) was taboo, but we sang songs and danced to them and hugged the girls until they would often grunt as we swung them clean off the floor or the ground, in the barn or house or on the green."<sup>31</sup> The equivalent of these games today are the couple games of Group III above. The forfeit games of the mixer group today are played mainly by children of early teen age who are most of the time not yet mature enough to risk such explicit choices. As far as can be judged, the emergence of these kissing games from forfeits and amusements is a spontaneous "folk" occurrence. An examination of a number of "Party" and "Indoor" game books dating from early in the century does not give any indication of adult encouragement for the type of games being discussed here. In fact, the reverse is the case. Great lengths are traversed in order to avoid the introduction of kissing, even in an event such as St. Valentine's Day. There are games with the titles of "Proposals," "Famous Lovers," "Flowery Romance," "Cupid's Carnival of Hearts," "Heart's Desire," "Heart's Fate," but no kissing. There are games of "Chew the String," "Bite the Apple," "Spin the Platter," "Postman," "Forfeits" and "Heavy Heavy Hang Over Your

Head," but no kissing. The only mention of kissing in all the books cited below is kissing a stone. Kissing the Blarney Stone! Clearly these party books continue the puritan tradition of the play-party.<sup>32</sup>

#### DISCUSSION

The picture of developmental change represented by these games must be taken into consideration briefly in order to explain why these games have persisted and increased in the modern world, a world not generally propitious to the persistence of ancient pastimes. Although, the role of games in development cannot be dealt with fully here, the general position taken is that a game performs something of a bridge function in development. It allows for the expression of given impulses but at the same time safeguards the players by putting limits on the way in which those impulses can be expressed.<sup>33</sup> That is, the game allows the player to grow along the lines that he desires, but it safeguards him against the danger of risking too much. The game is essentially an adventure of a non hazardous kind.

In group I, for example, the players are at the preadolescent age level which is characterized by indifference and hostility between the sexes. When boys and girls of this age level begin to show an interest in each other, they often do so in a rough, clothes-pulling, and arm-twisting manner. Their embryonic heterosexuality is aggressively displayed. They move into adolescent relationships in terms of the feelings they have learned in their preadolescence. The games of group I, boisterous though they are, place limits on these appetites at the same time as gratifying them. In "Freeze Tag," for example, you are permitted to kiss, and to chase, but only according to the rules. Although kissing in Western Culture is a symbol of the mature intimate relationship, in these games it is but a frenetic approximation to the form, with little of its spirit.

In the games of group II, thirteen, fourteen and fifteen-year-old children show less hurly-burly in their play but not much more expertise in handling their relationships with each other. These games provide a socially structured means by which they can be brought into relationship with each other, even to the extent of taking partners and kissing, but without responsibility for the partner choices that are made. The fortuitous elements in these games provide the youngsters with a form of trial-and-error partnership, but without the danger of being taken too seriously. They are able to indulge their own general interest in the opposite sex, but are defended against its outcome ("Could I help it if the bottle pointed my way!"). We need to remember that this is the age of tongue-tied and incompetent early

dating. By playing these games the children can be with the other sex and by following the rules they can act fairly competently. At the same time they are *protected from a commitment to another person* for which they may not yet be ready. Not unnaturally, most of the kissing is described by the participants as a "peck" rather than a kiss. During the games the manner of the play will vary with the maturity of the players. Some will be eager for the kissing. Some will be reluctant. The virtue of the games is that they allow some to reach quickly towards their heterosexual goals and others to drag their feet, and yet by participating still to remain members of their social group. In general, girls show an earlier interest in promoting these games than do boys. The greater physiological maturity of the girls and the greater cultural interest of women in romance is probably sufficient explanation for this. This earlier interest is demonstrated in the figures from the high school sample. The average number of games checked per child for the 5th, 6th and 7th grades was; boys: 2.9 and girls: 2.7. For the 8th and 9th grades; boys: 2.7 and girls: 6.6. For the 10th, 11th and 12th grades; boys: 7.1 and girls: 6.6. In sum, girls showed a marked increase in checking these games at the age of 13. Boys did not show an equivalent increase until the age of 15. These ages parallel closely the average ages for the onset of puberty. Total figures for likes and dislikes by boys and girls show that while girls check an average of five games, boys check only four. However, there is no significant tendency for girls to like these games more than boys do. Both sexes show approximately the same ratio of likes to dislikes (2:1).

In the group III stage there are girl informants who talk of getting together after the party to discuss which of the boys were the best kissers. But also reports in which boys were said to favor the more advanced games of Group III while the girls were trying to stay with the more guarded Group II games and thought of games such as "Flashlight" and "Endurance Kissing" as "quite disgusting." These differences are, however, simply further evidences of the varying levels of maturity and perhaps varieties of moral attitude involved. The important question to be asked of the games of the Group III stage, is why, if the couples are chosen, should there be any need for games? And in some reports indeed it was mentioned that parties would break up early so that each couple could go off on its own way for sometime before the required hour of arrival at home. However, when couples of sixteen, seventeen and eighteen years are not able to go off on their own, or have a social reason for staying together such as a birthday party, it is not unnatural that they develop

these group games of unabashed indulgence. Once again, of course, there will be less-mature children present who are happier holding the flashlight than cuddling in the corners of the room. Or, perhaps more important, there will still be children who prefer the relatively public nature of these games to the face-to-face intimacy of being alone with their date. Paradoxically as it may seem the public and funful nature of "Flashlight" and "Endurance Kissing" may be less anxiety provoking for some than the total and serious intimacy of necking in private. Just as "Spin the Bottle" provides a defense against the responsibility of choice, so "Flashlight" provides a *defense against the possibility of intimacy* which is, according to dynamic theory, quite a hurdle for the maturing child.<sup>34</sup> This is to say again that these games, like the others serve a bridge function. They provide a guarantee of certain gratifications, in this case relationship with the opposite sex, but they place limitations upon excess. One may enjoy a kissing relationship, but be protected from a more total and intimate commitment. The uncertainty of what "might" happen is removed by the structure of the game. If may, for example, be safer to "perdiddle" all the way home than to venture into the other unknown possibilities of an immature relationship.

Here then are a number of psychological reasons why the kissing games have not decreased as have so many other games but have prospered in the freer society of the young and immature.

#### SUMMARY<sup>35</sup>

This article describes approximately fifty kissing games collected from between three and four hundred persons. The games are categorized into the three classes of chasing-kiss, mixing-kiss and couple-kiss games. Various modes of play are described. It is shown that the kissing games of today are related historically to forfeit and amusement games, and that they have taken the place of the older marriage and courting games. It is suggested that they have prospered and developed in the modern world because they are appropriate to the parlor settings in middle and upper-middle-class homes, and because they satisfy the desire of adolescents for increasing heterosexual experience, but at the same time safeguard them against too open a commitment to, or too much intimacy with, the other sex. Thus these historically derived forms are changed and sustained by particular sociological and psychological circumstances of the present day.



## NOTES

- <sup>1</sup> Alice B. Gomme, *The Traditional Games of England, Scotland and Ireland*, I (London, 1894-98), 42 ("Bob Cherry").
- <sup>2</sup> Gomme, II, 255 ("Three Flowers").
- <sup>3</sup> Edwin F. Piper, "Some Play Party Games of the Middle West," *JAF*, XXVIII (July, 1915), 266 ("Chase That Squirrel").
- <sup>4</sup> Gomme, I, 215 ("Kiss and Clap"); *The Frank C. Brown Collection of North Carolina Folklore*, I (Durham, 1952) 123; Paul G. Brewster, *American Nonsinging Games* (Oklahoma, 1953), 154.
- <sup>5</sup> B. Sutton-Smith, "The Historical and Psychological Significance of the Unorganized Games of New Zealand Primary School Children." (Ph.D. Thesis: Univ. of New Zealand, 1954), p. 718 (Microfilm copy of typescript, 2 reels, positive, Ball State Teacher's College, Muncie, Indiana).
- <sup>6</sup> Gomme, I, 139.
- <sup>7</sup> Gomme, I, 137 and 148.
- <sup>8</sup> Sutton-Smith, p. 507.
- <sup>9</sup> Sutton-Smith, p. 718.
- <sup>10</sup> Brown collection, p. 111.
- <sup>11</sup> Gomme, I, 256 ("Jack's Alive"); Henry Betts, *The Games of Children* (London, 1929), p. 75.
- <sup>12</sup> William Wells Newell, *Games and Songs of American Children* (New York, 1883), p. 143.
- <sup>13</sup> Sutton-Smith, p. 501.
- <sup>14</sup> E. O. Harbin, *The Fun Encyclopedia* (New York, 1940), p. 145.
- <sup>15</sup> Brown collection, pp. 89-133.
- <sup>16</sup> Newell, p. 151.
- <sup>17</sup> Gomme, p. 404 ("American Post"); Brewster, p. 154.
- <sup>18</sup> Jessie H. Bancroft, *Games for the Playground, Home, School, and Gymnasium* (New York, 1909), p. 172.
- <sup>19</sup> Gomme, II, 312 ("Turn the Trencher"); Brewster, p. 32 ("Spin the Plate").
- <sup>20</sup> W. H. Whyte, *Street Corner Society* (Chicago, 1943).
- <sup>21</sup> Gomme, II, 255 ("Three Flowers").
- <sup>22</sup> Brewster, p. 37 (forfeits but no kiss).
- <sup>23</sup> Brown collection, I, 154; Brewster, p. 153.
- <sup>24</sup> Sutton-Smith, p. 664.
- <sup>25</sup> H. J. Eysenck, *Uses and Abuses of Psychology* (Middlesex, 1953), pp. 184ff.
- <sup>26</sup> Harold R. Phelps and John E. Horrocks, "Factors Influencing Informal Groups of Adolescents," *Child Development*, XXIX, 78.
- <sup>27</sup> Edwin F. Piper, "Some Play Party Games of the Midwest," *JAF*, XXVIII (July, 1915), p. 262.
- <sup>28</sup> Gomme, II, 325 ("Wadds and Wears").
- <sup>29</sup> Newell, p. 143 (No. 88).
- <sup>30</sup> Brown collection, pp. 89-133.
- <sup>31</sup> Foster Rhea Dulles, *America Learns to Play* (New York, 1940), p. 275.
- <sup>32</sup> J. H. Bancroft, op. cit., pp. 80, 254, and 257. Mary J. Breen, *The Party Book* (New York, 1939), pp. 23-24. Arthur M. Depew, *The Cokesbury Party Book* (New York, 1932), pp. 82 and 178. George Draper, *School, Church, Home and Gym Games* (New York, 1927), pp. 180 and 203. Helen and Larry Eisenberg, *The Omnibus of Fun* (New York, 1956), pp. 375 and 336. Edna Geister, *Geister Games* (New York, 1930). E. O. Harbin, *The Fun Encyclopedia* (New York, 1940), pp. 245, 254, 820 and 821. William Ralph La Porte, *A Handbook of Games and Programs* (New York, 1922), p. 54. Sidney Lear and M. B. Mishler, *The World's Best Book of Games and Parties* (Phil. 1926), p. 106. Snyder Madelin, *My Book of Parties* (New York, 1928). Bernard S. Mason and E. D. Mitchell, *Social Games for Recreation* (New York, 1935), pp. 71, 85 and 216. Theresa Hunt Wolcott, *The Book of Games and Parties* (Boston, 1911).
- <sup>33</sup> B. Sutton-Smith, "A Formal Analysis of Game Meaning," *Western Folklore*, XVIII (Jan., 1959), 13-24.
- <sup>34</sup> E. H. Erikson, *Childhood and Society* (New York, 1950), p. 229.
- <sup>35</sup> I wish to acknowledge the assistance of David W. Smith in collecting the high school sample and Judy Trumbell in preparing the manuscript.

## THE 1960 HOOSIER FESTIVAL

Robert W. Montgomery—Pauline W. Montgomery, Directors

TIME August 14-18, 1960

PLACE Clifty Inn, Clifty Falls State Park at Madison

COST Registration, meals and lodging from (including) Sunday evening dinner through and including Thursday morning breakfast, \$50-55.

## TENTATIVE PROGRAM

SUNDAY Registration 8:00 P.M.

Introduction and "Get Acquainted Party"

MORNINGS 9:00-11:00

1. Migration Patterns, People and effect on state history and culture.
2. Transportation, Rivers, Canals, Turnpikes, Railroads, Bridges.
3. Folklore Collecting.

AFTERNOONS 2:30-4:30

1. Early Professions, Medicine, Law, Teaching.
2. Hoosier Authors, Riley, Ade, Eggleston, Tarkington.
3. Indiana Houses and Furnishings, 1810-1850, Slides, Lectures, Discussions, Field Trips.

MONDAY EVENING

Folk Music and Play Party Games

TUESDAY EVENING

Old Fashioned Ice Cream Social (Everybody taking a turn at the freezers), Songs, Ballads.

WEDNESDAY EVENING

Song Fest and "Our Hoosier Heritage."

(Continued on page 224)



BY MRS. W. F. MITCHELL  
London, England

## TRAVELER'S TALES OF ROBERT CLOUSTON: EARLY MIDWESTERN LIFE AND MANNERS

*... a fellow, boasting very much of his Country said, "now Stranger, I guess you find us pretty considerable smart in these here diggins!—yes—I reckon we air rayther cute! We beat all creation and a piece on t'other side of it at speckelation! Yes-s Sir-r-r—one of our citizens was left on a desert island and he—I swear—realized a fortin by swopping his jacket from one hand to the other—Yes-s Sir-r-r!!*

**T**O ROBERT CLOUSTON that story was a "genuine Yankeeism" which amused him "not a little." He heard it on his journey in 1846 from Fort Garry to St. Louis and it was one of the anecdotes which he included in the journal he sent home to his parents.<sup>1</sup> A young officer in the service of the Hudson's Bay Company, he had left his native Orkney in 1838, at the age of seventeen, and had come out to Rupert's Land as a clerk. The only North America he knew was the wilderness and the colony at Red River, where he had lived from 1842, yet he was not just another Britisher along the Mississippi. His early life had been spent far from urbanized England and his experiences in a new country had given him a certain amount of understanding and tolerance. Besides, his youth and sense of humour would have prevented his ever becoming another Mrs. Trollope or Charles Dickens. Of much that he saw he did not approve but his general picture is altogether more sympathetic and he was able to recognize and record something of the real spirit of the west of his day.

Given his background, both at home and in the semi-military discipline of the Company's service, it was natural that it should be the "apparent equality" of American society which most disturbed him. Travelling up-river from St. Louis by steamboat on his return journey its iniquities struck him forcibly.

To a person from the old Country, accustomed to the restraints of the strongly marked and carefully guarded line of distinction between different classes of society,—that tacit understanding that exists between men of education and rank and the lower classes and which is seldom broken through—the manners of American Society and the apparent equality (in some respects) of all classes, appear unnatural and sometimes disgusting: to give an example of this—when we put ashore at Davenport, there was an immediate rush from the land of a motley crowd of twenty or thirty people, who walked straight into the cabin; seating themselves, they would draw their legs over the back of a chair or upon the table—squirting tobacco juice all over the carpet: some of them were rather out-at-elbows—with their boots outside their trousers—their hats stuck on the back of their heads, while with an air of mingled effrontery and self-esteem they gazed at the “strangers” and made shrewd “guesses” as to their business and destination: two dirty-looking rascals had a fight in the cabin but were ejected from the premises.—Thus it is at every port—all the idle blackguards of the place scramble on board as though they came to a show of wild beasts.—There is a most overbearing tendency among the lower classes in this country to put down those who are above them by fortune, and their ideas of an aristocratic man are rather ludicrous: a person is aristocratic if he “don’t chaw baccay”; or if, instead of shovelling his meals down his throat with a knife, he uses a fork; if he uses a private conveyance in travelling: if he objects to sleeping in an eight-bedded room with a postillion or blackleg, as the case may be, for a bed-fellow—these and a hundred other frivolous things stamp a man as an aristocrat: the same spirit of independence is also frequently shewn among the militia, as, for instance, in the case of an officers drilling some recruits, ordering one fellow to stand erect and place his feet in a certain position—he answered, “see you darned first”!

The general level of manners seemed to Clouston deplorable although he could not help but be amused at what he saw. He traveled by stage from Prairie du Chien to Galena on his outward journey and the first evening arrived at Plattsville.

. . . this town, commenced only 6 or seven years ago, already contains a population of several thousand; . . . We had hardly entered [the inn], when an old fellow with a bell in his hand went to the street door and commenced ringing a peal, such as—in the good old town of Kirkwall,<sup>2</sup> used to precede the announcement of sheep or geese to be sold, or, a meeting of the magistrates in the “Toon Ha”: this acted upon the listeners like an electric shock: down went newspapers & books—feet and legs were dislodged from the backs of chairs and from desks and tables, and every man made a rush to the inner door—hope and anxiety were pictured upon their visages—with now and then a slight dash of despair, while, as the crowd squeezed through the narrow passage a few “darns” and “tarnations” were ejaculated, through closed teeth and with a peculiar nasal twang, by some poor wight afraid of losing his share of the “chicken fixins”; all this meant that supper was ready—and, being the last to take a seat at the table I had to regale myself upon Coffee and bread: little or no conversation went on at table,—every one appearing to act up to the maxim that “there is a time for every thing.”

Describing this same inn in a letter to his "old Bourgeois"<sup>3</sup> Clouston enlarged a little.

*I was put into a room with 4 others and the bedclothes looked so very uninviting that I did not undress: I here secured my money and Bills by tying them up in a handkerchief which I made a belt of:—all these villages being in the mining country, are infested by hordes of swindlers, blacklegs and robbers and law is a mere byword: every man trusts for justice and protection to the pistol or the bowie-knife: at these inns it is amusing to witness the scramble made to get washed; there is generally a tin basin chained to a bench at the door, and every one has to wash in this & to dry his face with the same towel.—after this a bell rings and off they fly to the breakfast table—every man endeavoring to get seated before his neighbor, and when seated it is again "devil take the hindmost"—roasted apples, fish, potatoes & bread are shovelled down with astonishing rapidity and the vacancies filled up with coffee.—*

Perhaps it was the discomforts to which travelers were subjected by landlords and transport companies which exasperated him most. Again he blamed much of it on the spirit of equality which prevailed. At St. Paul he ". . . had been shoved into a three-bedded room, with 4 fellows of not very respectable appearance—and besides this, the place was full of fleas and bugs; as a fellow said to me—"Yes, stranger, I reckon they *do* raise a considerable quantity of fleas in these here diggings!" On the steamer from Peoria to St. Louis he "encountered a strange mixture of people: there was a Senator—seven Cherokee Indians bound for Washington—Irish and German labourers, Yankee & Canadian raftsmen, merchants, pilots &c—all mess at the same table & if they could manage it—they would have put us all to sleep in the same bed."<sup>4</sup> But he found one "snug little inn belonging to a Mr. Hone" at the mouth of Lake St. Croix, thirty five miles by river below St. Paul. "My two men encamped on the bank of the river—being apparently more at their ease in the open air than in the house—especially as Mr. Hone sold no liquor of any kind: I toasted myself before the kitchen stove until I was tolerably dry and then went to bed." And in St. Louis of course he was suitably impressed by the Planter's House.

In 1850 Clouston made another journey to St. Paul from Fort Garry to arrange for the transport to Red River of goods which he had bought for the Company in New York in the spring. From New York he had traveled to Montreal on his way west so his knowledge of America was by now considerably enlarged. In the interval he had also been to London. He did not find frontier manners much changed but he knew that they represented only a part of America.

*I must tell you of one peculiarity in the out-of-the-way Hotels in the States. There is generally a room close by the "Bar" where you will see a hair-brush*

hung up for general use; a solitary little looking glass & a tin wash-hand basin, I have seen the same in the steamers on the rivers.

When the bell rung for meals, there was a rush from the verandah, from upstairs, from the bar, & from the street, & woe betide the unlucky wight who only "came in at the death," his chance was small of either "chicken fixins" or "common doings."

I suppose there are no finer hotels anywhere, & no better fare & attendance than in New York & St. Louis, but in the distant States, the reverse is the case & generally speaking the class of people less pleasant to mix with.

In a little wayside inn in Illinois during my former journey I sat down to breakfast with about 20 others: not being able to carry much baggage across the prairies I was in my voyageur dress, & was recognized as a stranger: one dirty looking subject who sat close by me, & who was "out at elbows" although addressed as 'Judge' made a dead set at me, to find out who I was, where from, whither bound, & what I was travelling for found himself rebuffed in I suppose a very unusual way, for I had not got accustomed then to the free & easy interest that every one seems to take in every body else's affairs.

I stopped him at last by saying that I never spoke of my private affairs to strangers, & I rose up & left the table, I had seen this character imbibing almost a tumbler full of raw whiskey before breakfast.

I was told by a gentleman whom I could credit that in a steamer on one of the lakes, he was carving a fowl at dinner time, when his vis-a-vis stretched out his fork across the table & merely saying "Stranger I'll take some of that chicken" carried off a wing.

Yet even in 1846 Clouston had discovered that "American gentlemen are very different from these rascally, bragging, low-bred scoundrels one meets along the roads:—I made the acquaintance of several & like them much."<sup>5</sup> One of them, a Mr. Edward Wheelwright from Boston introduced him in Galena "to the acquaintance of Mr. Sherry Cobler—the most delicious *drink* I had ever tasted, made of sherry, the rind of a lemon & ice water."

It delighted Clouston to repeat the stories he had collected. Canoeing down the Mississippi from St. Paul, "I was much amused with the seriousness of tone and manner with which my old Canadian Steersman recounted the wonderful power of a man who died a few years since at the Prairie du Chien, in preserving the lives of people bitten by the rattlesnake: 'he visited the room where the unhappy victim lay—charming the treacherous snake into his presence, scolded him severely for his bad conduct, after which he seized the reptile by the tail and flung it out *dead*'—this—the simple-hearted old fellow believed like scripture."

It was on the Mississippi too, that Clouston heard a boatman guessing that "there was a diggin (a farm) near as he had heard the *chickens crowing*" and thought he had discovered the origin of an odd American habit: "Though the days are oppressively hot, the

nights are always cold at this season, which causes frequent fogs and renders the country very unhealthy: hence, perhaps, arises the general habit of taking 'bitters' (or, in other words whisky) in the morning, to neutralise the effects of the damp air."

On the steamer from Peoria to St. Louis "One of the passengers speaking to me of canoes, said, he 'guessed they were just about the most *ramtagerous fixins* he ever saw'—'for,' said he, 'I once crossed the St. Lawrence in one and she was so darned ticklish that I had to spit right, straight ahead—a little to one side would have upset her!'"

Leaving Beatown, a small village in the mining district, on his way to Galena from *Pairie du Chien*, "we had a coach full of passengers of every variety of blackguard: one boasting Yankee, after extolling himself a good deal said, 'well, now, G-d D-n my eyes, if I can't beat anything on God's own earth at jumping'—an Irish miner told him to 'hold his jaw' or he would pitch him out—'for' said he, 'you don't *deserve* a sate in the company of jintlemen.'"<sup>7</sup> Yet at Plattsville where they stopped for the night, Clouston had reason to appreciate the kindness of an old soldier who warned him against his roommate, one of his fellow-travellers, a professional gambler of Irish extraction.

After supper, my fellow-traveller McDwyer asked he to take a walk through the town, and, going out we turned up a narrow street, and he led me into a tavern, where he was recognized by the barkeeper: I thought this rather strange, as he had told me that he was quite a stranger in the town; however, I was soon enabled to solve the difficulty, as he retired with his friend into an inner room, in which as the door opened, I saw a number of people sitting round a card table—while he was absent, an old soldier came up and whispered—"do you know your companion," I said he was merely an acquaintance of a day; "well" said he, "take care what you are about, for he is a blackleg"; I thanked the old fellow for his information and said that it did not matter much to me what the man was; however, the warning was timely. McD— and his friend returned to the bar and we had a glass of wine to each other's health. We then, all three sallied out—I followed, callous as to where he might lead me, for I thought he would not attempt any thing more serious than to engage me in play and that I was resolved to avoid; we then entered a large hall, splendidly fitted up and brilliantly lighted, in which a number of men were playing at billiards: as we entered, McDwyer received a glance of recognition from several of the players and as the game ended, I was pressed to play but refused, saying that I never played either billiards or cards: they they wished to make me drink but this also I refused saying that I came merely as a looker-on: seeing my obstinacy they desisted and I returned with McDwyer to the Inn; he warned me to be extremely cautious in passing through this country, "for" said he, "people who are supposed to carry much money about them are liable to be robbed or knocked on the head"—I answered that I had but a very small sum about me and that I always had the means of defence showing him the butt end of a pistol (which I would use if circumstances required it): he said I was

perfectly right to be upon my guard—and I believed him—however, we occupied the same bed—without undressing—that night, and next morning about 6 A.M. I shook hands with McDwyer and wished him success in his profession.

Every country was represented in the west. In St. Louis an old Parisian captivated Clouston "by his strictures on Poets."

"Shak-his-speare" as he called him—"was one ver great Poet, but he ave too moch of de ghosts in his writings, pour frighten de old womens and childrens: he was de poet of his century but not of de present siecle"—"Byron, too, was one ver great man—he ave de—de—de grande idee—de big mind—de—de power of de imagination—he was de poet of his tam" &c &c &c—I was sorry I could not converse with him in his own language (for there is a vast difference between Parisien french, and the jargon of the Canadians)—the old fellow was a good-hearted soul and loved "La Belle France" enthusiastically.

Clouston saw Yankee "speckelation" at first hand in the boom towns on the Mississippi and he has caught its patter to perfection. They were traveling up-river from Rock River Rapid and

. . . in the course of the day we passed several towns (so called)—one of them—New Albany, consisted of one store and about half-a-dozen small hovels,—these "towns" spring up suddenly in the following manner: two or three people club together, select a situation and either with their personal means or with borrowed money, run up a store and a few houses: they then draw up a plan of "the City"—sticking in a courthouse, an hotel, a few churches, prison & theatre all which look very well on paper—give flourishing names to imaginary streets and then advertise for sale "the few vacant Lots": "enterprising men of capital" are assured that the "investment" will be a profitable one: if the thing "takes" and purchasers "come down" with ready money, they "realize" a handsome profit but if, as frequently happens, people are backward in purchasing—the houses fall into ruins. We reached Galena on the evening of the 24th—On the 26th we passed Potosi and afterwards the town of Cassville: this last contains merely a fine large hotel and a few wretched-looking wooden houses: the hotel was built in '37 at a cost of twenty five thousand dollars: it is a monument to the rage for "speckelation" and a warning to the simple and thoughtless.

Travelers' tales, like photographs, need a leavening of people. Clouston's lively observations on the lives and habits of those he met add both interest and value to his journal.

#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Part of this journal was published in *Minnesota History* (June, 1958).

<sup>2</sup> Principal town and capital of the Orkney Islands.

<sup>3</sup> Chief Factor Donald Ross, under whom Clouston first served at Norway House. Ross's letters are in the British Columbia Archives at Victoria. Robert Clouston to Donald Ross, Fort Garry, Dec. 6, 1846.

<sup>4</sup> Both quotations are from the above letter of Clouston to Ross.

<sup>5</sup> Clouston to Ross.

<sup>6</sup> August.

<sup>7</sup> Clouston to Ross.



BY KENNETH S. GOLDSTEIN  
*University of Pennsylvania*

## FOLKLORE ON RECORDS

A review editor's record listening habits tend to be completely unorganized by the very task which is his responsibility to the publication for which he is editor. Every folk music record (and occasional other records as well) which are either sent to him unsolicited, or are requested by him from the record producer, must be given a thorough hearing. This *can* be a pleasant task, but as often as not, because of the tremendously diverse interests which inspire and impel record producers to record folksongs and folksingers, the reviewer is forced to wade through literally tons of trash to find an occasional gem worth commenting upon. The diversity of the contents of these albums leave the reviewer in a state of nervous shock after any extended listening session, for he is forced to jump from record to

record without ever being able to establish a continuity of mood and emotion. This review editor is therefore forced to apologize for his pogo-stick approach, hopping around from record to record in an attempt to survey a handful of the more than a hundred records to which he has listened during the three month period prior to his review deadline.

Folkways Records alone has produced more than thirty folk song albums during the three-month period covered by this review. Of these, perhaps the most important is an album titled *Field Trip—England* (Folkways FW 8871), collected by Jean Ritchie and her husband, George Pickow, when Jeanie was on a Fulbright collecting trip in the British Isles several years ago. From the many hundreds of recorded reels of tape made on that trip, she has chosen eighteen selections ranging from two Morris dance instrumentals to a carol performance by hand bell ringers. In between these selections she manages to present us with a fascinating survey of singing England—from traditional instrumentalists and singers to several of the leading representatives of the “revival” school of singing, including Ewan MacColl and Isla Cameron. Particularly effective and important recording are those of Jack Armstrong playing “My Bonny Lad” on Northumbrian Small Pipes, and Harry Cox’s singing of “The Young Sailor Cut Down in His Prime,” a descendant of “The Unfortunate Rake” in sailor’s dress.

Three Folkways albums representing American singing traditions also deserve comment here. In an album of *Missouri Folk Songs* (Folkways FH 5324), a teacher-collector named Loman D. Cansler gives a short survey of some of the songs which have come his way by virtue of his own family tradition and/or the tape recorder. Though Mr. Cansler’s performances are occasionally histrionic, his singing generally tends to be true to the singing style which I have associated with Missouri and Arkansas singers from listening to field recordings of various collectors from that region. The fourteen songs in the album include a Child ballad, several British broadside pieces, a handful of native American ballads and songs, a Brush Arbor church song and several sentimental pieces from the nineteenth century which passed into tradition because they made *good singing* consistent with the maudlin sentimentality and moral upbringing of the singers themselves. Mr. Cansler’s notes on the songs leave much to be desired, but despite the lack of scholarship we owe a debt to this fine amateur collector for his efforts.

*Folksongs of Maine*, (Folkways FH 5323), sung by the brilliant young American folklorist Edward “Sandy” Ives, is a superb combina-



tion of good singing, fine program, and scholarship. The thirteen songs in this album are divided into two groupings, side one of the record devoted to "History in Song," and side two to "Songs of Woodsmen and Sailors." Over half of the songs have never previously appeared on recordings. In order to present them in this recording, Mr. Ives has occasionally resorted to text and tune collation from different sources, and in one case to supplying a tune of his own making. But such "crimes" of scholarship are duely noted and the listener who reads the notes in the accompanying booklet will at least be forewarned.

In the album *Snooks Eaglin: New Orleans Street Singer* (Folkways FA 2476), we are presented with an enigma—a traditional street singer whose materials are learned largely from recordings and radio. Blind since infancy (he developed glaucoma when only nineteen months old), the twenty-two-year-old Snooks Eaglin is a modern street minstrel. An unusually talented self-taught guitarist, Eaglin must be considered as a straight line descendant of the blind street singers of yesteryear. The fact that his repertory was largely learned from commercial and standardized media—usually considered the bane of tradition—makes Eaglin no less a traditional singer than many of the folksingers whose texts and tunes have been carefully presented to us in a multitude of printed collections made in this century. Depth interviewing of such informants to ascertain the source of their materials would probably have resulted in finding that many singers learned at least some of their songs from recordings and radio. Folklorists readily recognize the importance of broadsides and songsters in starting songs into oral circulation, or placing them back into similar circulation. Radio and recordings should now be recognized as a related media form, with the added dimension of sound.

Elektra Records has produced in this period a varied group of performances by professional "singers of folksong," most of which will be of little value to folklorists except as plain entertainment. Two albums, however, deserve mention in this review. Oscar Brand's latest album, *The Wild Blue Yonder* (Elektra EKL-168), as devastatingly and brashly performed as all of his many previous efforts, warrants a reviewer's comment by way of its subject matter. This is an album of Air Corps songs from World War II, pieces passed on largely by oral circulation by a homogenous "folk" group—Air Force personnel. Brand, justly infamous for his bawdy song recordings on another label (which will receive detailed coverage in a future review article presently being prepared by Gershon Legman), has

presented us with a mildly-worded group of songs, representative, however, of the non-bawdy repertory of Air Force singers. This is an area worth investigation, as indeed is all military-personnel folklore, for this is modern folklore in its most vital form. Together with William Wallrich's delightful little book, *Air Force Airs* (New York, 1957), this album is an excellent introduction to the subject.

*The Many Sides of Sandy Paton* (Elektra EKL-148) introduces to American recording audiences a young man who must be rated as one of the better of the numerous "city-billy" folksingers who are daily served up to us on gleaming platters. As this reviewer has frequently commented in previous reviews, it takes more than a pleasant voice to make a good singer of folksongs. An understanding of tradition and traditional performance is a necessary prerequisite for intelligent singing of such songs. Mr. Paton has both a fine voice and a sympathetic understanding of tradition. He has travelled around America listening to both traditional and non-traditional folksingers, and has learned both the strength and weakness of both classes. In 1958, he travelled through the British Isles with an open mind and ear, sopping up British tradition. He has previously recorded three albums on the British label, Collector Records, mostly of American materials, so it is only fitting that his first American recording should consist mainly of numbers learned on his British jaunts. Especially effective are his performances of the Scots "tinker" song, "The Begging Tongue," and the hauntingly beautiful "Wild Mountain Thyme," Scottish in origin and language, but sung here as found in Ireland.

Riverside Records, once a major producer of folk music recordings, but now slowed down to a walk, came up with one gem during this period. *English and Scottish Love Songs* (Riverside RLP 12-656), sung by Ewan MacColl and Isla Cameron, accompanied respectively by Peggy Seeger and Ralph Rinzler on banjo or guitar, is a potpourri of songs which deal, in one way or another, with the amorous conduct of Britishers. MacColl is at his best when performing the "big" ballads, as in "Will Ye Gang to the Hielands," a Scots version of "Geordie" (Child #209) with the less common ending in which the wife succeeds in freeing the noble poacher. Only slightly less effective is his rendition of "The Foggy Dew" and "The Bird in the Bush," two English love songs which have been cleansed all too frequently for genteel audiences, but which are here sung in their sensually free texts. Miss Cameron, one of the most talented of British female singers, has never been well recorded, and in this album she is still not at her best. But Miss Cameron at less than her best is still better than most, as is made crystal clear in her performances of "The Bonny

Miner Lad," "Still I Love Him," "The Waters of Tyne," and an English version of "Geordie" (Child #209).

Tradition Records presents a sparkling album of Irish Songs, *Come Fill Your Glass With Us* (Tradition TLP 1032), sung by Tommy Makem and Tom, Liam, and Patrick Clancy. Intended as an album of Irish Drinking Songs, the listener quickly realizes that any good song sings even better over a glass of Irish whiskey, beer, or whatever your taste may run to. The four singers are real Irishmen, only a few years removed from "the old sod." Their singing is representative of the Anglo-Irish tradition of the cities, and a finer bunch of voices never raised a glass and a song together.

Classic Editions, generally unknown to folk music enthusiasts and scholars, won't make any folk music headlines with *A Day in the Park* (CE 1043), simply because the album isn't a folk music album in the usual sense of the word. On it one will hear the background score to a film, a "Toy Concerto," four English pieces for recorder and three German dances for recorders; the other side of the record contains seven American folk songs played by a recorder consort, and a group of six Irish and English folk songs sung by Jean Ritchie. The remarks in this review are restricted to Miss Ritchie's contribution to the album, which alone make it worth buying. Miss Ritchie collected these songs on her Fulbright trip to Great Britain, and here performs them as an American interpreter of music not traditional to her. Having heard several of these songs in their original performance on the tapes recorded by Miss Ritchie, I am able to state that she is as fine an interpreter of somebody else's songs as she is a singer of pieces traditional to her own family. Especially delightful are her performances of three Irish songs, "As I Roved Out," "With Kitty I'll Go" (a translation from Gaelic), and "Come All Ye Jolly Huntsmen."

In a recent article in the British magazine *Recorded Folk Music*,<sup>1</sup> Peter Kennedy bemoaned the fact that despite the existence of "the finest imaginable folk songs and the most varied instrumental music . . . next to none of it has ever appeared on a commercial gramophone record published in Britain." Times appear to be getting better "over there," however, for included in a pack of recordings received from England were two noteworthy ones of Scottish folksong. Jeannie Robertson, perhaps the greatest traditional ballad singer living in Scotland, has recorded for Collector Records an album titled *The Galloway Hills* (JES. 1). Included on this 45 RPM, Extended-Play recording are the title song and "The Reel of Tullochgorm," "Jeanie My Dear Would You Marry Me," "Bonny Lass Come Ower the

Burn," "Cuttie's Waddlin'," and "The Yowie Wi the Crookit Horn." If you haven't heard Jeannie before (on her Riverside album) you're in for a real treat: And we understand that this is the first of several such recordings which Collector Records will be producing of her singing during the next few years. We can only hope that these recordings prove financially successful enough to make certain their release of these intended recordings.

Also on Collector Records can be heard *Robin Sings Glasgow Street Songs* (JES. 2), sung by the talented young Scots singer Robin Hall. Mr. Hall sings a program of five Glasgow street songs to his own guitar accompaniment. The backliner to this 45 RPM album informs us that the singer owes his interest in Scottish folksongs to folklorist Hamish Henderson of the Edinburgh University School of Scottish Studies. We can thank Mr. Henderson for his part in this (and also for "discovering" Jeannie Robertson), for Mr. Hall is the best British "city-billy" this reviewer has had the pleasure of hearing. Several of these songs can be heard in other parts of Scotland as well, but Mr. Hall has chosen to sing us Glasgow versions. I hope we will be hearing further recordings of this young Scots singer in the near future. He's well worth the time and money, if you can obtain a copy of this recording.<sup>2</sup>

#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> "British Folk Music On Record," in *Recorded Folk Music*, Volume 2, January-February 1959.

<sup>2</sup> Collector Records are produced by Jazz Selection, 100 Charing Cross Road, London, W.C. 2, England, from whom copies can probably be obtained.

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#### THE 1960 HOOSIER FESTIVAL (continued from page 212)

We have assurance from a number of people, who have knowledge in the various fields, of their cooperation and assistance as discussion leaders, lecturers, moderators or whatever for each of the various categories. For instance, there is an old time river boat captain, a retired judge, a country doctor; Gene Bock in Transportation; Bruce Buckley in Folklore and Singing; John Windle for Houses and Furnishings.

If you are interested please write to Miss Joyce Allen, R. 5, Greensburg, Indiana. Indicate whether you would be interested in other subject fields such as Indians of Indiana, Pioneer Arts and Crafts, Genealogy, Indiana Painters and Pioneer Politics.

BY BRIAN SUTTON-SMITH  
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**THE SINGING  
STREETS, AND SOME  
COMMENTS ON THE  
CLASS DIFFUSION  
OF CHILDREN'S  
LORE: A REVIEW  
ARTICLE**

*The Singing Streets: Childhood Memories of Ireland and Scotland.* Performed by Dominic Behan and Ewan MacColl. Edited, with introductory notes, by Kenneth S. Goldstein. (Folkways Records, FW 8501. 12" LP; booklet containing introduction, full script, biographical and source notes, 12 pp.; New York, 1958) \$5.95.

This record succeeds immediately because of the nostalgic pleasure it evokes. In one hundred rhymes, songs, sayings and their own commentary, MacColl and Behan present us with a robust and sonorous boys'-eye view of their slum childhoods in Scotland and Ireland. In the accompanying and parallel booklet, editor Goldstein suggests reasonably that the record could be used in classes to give students a feeling for the raw materials of juvenile folklore. He makes a case also for the record's use as a scholarly document, but if it is

to be used in this way, there are certain qualifications which must be taken into account.

There is little of the girls'-eye view in this recording although there are a number of girls' singing games. Few men, even MacColl, who has the tune correctly enough, could capture, for example, the poignance of the "Golden City" when sung by girls:

*She is handsome, she is pretty,  
She is the girl of the golden city.*

I suspect that if this document of childhood was supplemented by a woman's voice and a woman's comments, it would have in it relatively less protest and much less malarkey.

While the footnotes indicating the sources of each verse are an important addition to the booklet accompanying the record, they show that while Behan's verses all come from his own childhood in Dublin, MacColl's are derived from a number of Scottish towns, a few even from Manchester, and that though they are taken mainly from his own childhood, they are taken also from his mother, a man of forty-seven, and a child. Now one basic condition of any scholarly document is that its sampling in time and place should be systematic. It is legitimate for one or two persons of identified characteristic (name, sex, age, town, socio-economic level, race, religion, etc.) to give an oral report, but once the investigation goes beyond that, the principles of representative sampling in different places and different historical periods must be taken into account. Otherwise we cannot make legitimate decisions about the diffusion and currency of the phenomena reported. Whatever aesthetic quality MacColl's additional pieces, including a song of his own, may add to the record, they are irrelevant as research materials. Of course, the footnotes make this reviewer's analysis possible and for this we must be thankful, but the suggestion follows that the record maker should approach his aesthetic as well as scholarly tasks in a systematic fashion.

In the introductory note to the booklet Kenneth Goldstein issues a challenge to the social sciences to explain the class diffusion of these oral phenomena. There are two obstacles, however, to serious work with childhood materials. First, is the poor example set by most collectors of juvenalia whose methods are usually at the level referred to disparagingly in elementary texts as "anecdotal." Second, there is the long standing and widespread puritanical prejudice against childhood "trivia," a prejudice which still prevails against juvenile folk materials although it no longer applies to the childhood "trivia" originating in the twentieth-century adult mind, viz., toys, sports, recreations, TV programs, etc. Neither of these



obstacles is of course insurmountable. If the playgrounds of the world were arranged along a hypothetical scale with the folk "trivia" at one end and the "trivia" of the mass media at the other, we could perhaps sketch in the background required to begin thinking about Mr. Goldstein's challenge. At one end would be the rural areas and the modern slums where "deprived" children play out their vestigial versions of older folk cultures peculiarly adapted to their own more childish needs and the characteristics of their physical environments. In general, for rural areas to be fruitful in these respects, they must have had a play tradition dating back for many centuries. In the countries of the newer world, where emigration and novel conditions have broken the continuity, there are many isolated rural settlements where folk tradition is practically nonexistent. In the past one hundred years the greatest proliferation of juvenalia seems to have occurred where large bodies of persons from old rural and village areas have aggregated in large cities. This movement while usually fatal to adult folk-culture, has not been so damaging to children. At least this is the impression one gets from the present record and from works such as Norman Douglas's *London Street Games*.

Somewhere in the middle of this hypothetical scale are children of the newer and materially more prosperous countries, who live in between two worlds, the echo of the older one and the insistent voice of the modern one beckoning through the mass media. This was perhaps the position of the children of the middle classes between the two world wars. Children of higher social classes have for centuries fitted at this middle point on the scale. For them the adult world was represented by the educational institutions of the aristocracy. The folk world was introduced to them peripherally via their nurses and servants. As John P. Marquand states in *The Late George Apley*, "It seems a little ironical how much of our culture seemed to come from the stable and the kitchen when we had such opportunities to meet the greatest figures of our time." The acquaintance of these wealthy children with folk traditions, however, ceased with their entrance to prep or grammar school, where there were other and upper-class traditions and lore to be learned.

At the other extreme on the scale are the children who are completely provided for, and whose needs and interests are all met in terms of a comprehensive adult view of childhood growth. Their parents may have a progressive educational philosophy, an extreme political philosophy (as in Nazi Germany), or they may be merely prosperous and sentimental about children (as are many post-WW II



upper middle-class Americans). All make a perspicacious provision for their children; and as a result, the older oral culture comes to these children with minor exceptions only through the literate culture of their parents, teachers and recreation leaders. This is a quite distinct sort of participation from that of MacColl and Behan. Current studies of my own indicate that middle-class boys have been pushed further along this scale than have girls, and that their play has become increasingly narrow in range. The girls, who are still somewhat deprived in terms of status, continue their quaint pastimes of jump-rope, ball-bouncing and singing games. No doubt increasing equality will change their situation also. What difference this all makes to children is too big a problem to be taken up here. Naturally, we are all sorry to see the older traditions of MacColl and Behan go, and *that*, more than anything else, is what makes their record valuable, but we can hardly advocate that large numbers of children continue to be deprived in order to keep these traditions alive.

## ARCHIVE FOR PENNSYLVANIA FOLKLORE

The Pennsylvania State University Library has recently established an Archive for Pennsylvania Folklore which will include books, films, manuscripts, music and recordings as they become available.

This program has been initiated with a deposit of materials from the Pennsylvania Folklore Society.

George Korson, President of the Society, has appointed a committee to represent the Society in its relations with the Archive. Members of this committee are: Dr. MacEdward Leach of the University of Pennsylvania, chairman; Dr. Maurice A. Mook of Penn State; Dr. George Swetnam and Mr. Jacob Evanson of Pittsburgh; and Mrs. Nancy Keffer Ford of Philadelphia.

## BOOK REVIEWS

### GENERAL STUDIES

*Whatever Makes Papa Laugh, A Folklore Sheaf Honoring Harold W. Thompson.* Edited by Warren S. Walker. (Cooperstown, New York: New York Folklore Society, 1958.) Pp. iii + 105. The book is a special printing of Volume XIV, number 3, of *New York Folklore Quarterly*. \$2.00.

Folklorists know Professor Harold W. Thompson best for his collection of New York State traditions, *Body, Boots, & Britches*. Owing to its excellence and amplitude, the book has become a standard by which subsequent compilations of state lore are measured. The first three essays in *Whatever Makes Papa Laugh* are biographical reminiscences of Thompson the scholar, teacher, and personality by Francis E. Mineka, Carl Carmer, and Israel Kaplan, while the fourth, by Louis C. Jones, touches more particularly upon Thompson the folklorist and upon his dominant role in bringing New York's traditions to light.

*Whatever Makes Papa Laugh* contains five additional articles, explorations or surveys of specific topics: B. A. Botkin discusses experiments made by members of the Federal Writers Project in recording workers' fantasy-effusions, articulations imbued with the idiom and whimsy of the informant's occupational group, uttered during moments of inspired improvisation; Frank M. Warner writes of his ballad-collecting and presents a sampling of New York State texts and tunes; William G. Tyrrell surveys and evaluates the folk-music recordings of New York State; Herbert Halpert treats that sizable body of belief and story centering about birthmarks and deformities caused by (so legend has it) a parent's shocking experience or produced by some other person's malign conjuration; and Raven I. McDavid, Jr., describes the procedure groups of linguists use to investigate systematically and cooperatively predetermined geographical areas and indicates some methods which folklorists should consider employing.

Although *Whatever Makes Papa Laugh* is aimed primarily at a New York State audience, a portion of the material has a more than local significance and will interest folklorists in general.

University of Maine  
Orono, Maine

Bacil F. Kirtley

*The Family Saga and Other Phases of American Folklore.* Mody C. Boatright, Robert B. Downs, and John T. Flanagan. (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1958.) Pp. ix + 65. \$2.50.

This book contains three speeches—the sixth annual Windsor lectures at the University of Illinois—of which the first is Professor Boatright's "The Family Saga as a Form of Folklore." Second and third are Dean Downs's "Apocryphal Biology: A Chapter in American Folklore" and Professor Flanagan's "Folklore in American Literature."

With originality, entertainment value, and considerable plausibility Boatright employs the term *saga* to refer to a series of semi-historical tales in one's family history. Actually, only two-thirds (twelve) of his tales are really family incidents, one of which is also a ghost story and three are treasure-stories. Two of the others are individual's incidents, two are hunting stories of sagacity or luck, one is a comic Indian-mule tale, and the last, and much the best, is a multi-motif story of Josiah Wilbarger's scalping. Worth noting are Boatright's criteria of folk admissibility of the mysterious:

In most segments of our population the ghost story survives only as a quaint relic of the past. It will not be a part of the living folklore unless it is both marvelous and believable (page 13).

"Apocryphal Biology" deals with two types of American folk creatures: fabulous beasts (myth), and known fauna and flora which indulge in "improbable behavior" (legend). Among the former are hodags, squonks, and snipes; among the latter, Mark Twain's blue jay, razorback hogs, and Venus's-flytraps. Admittedly the shaggy-dog stories with which Dr. Downs closes are not entirely apropos of his descriptive inclusions.

Professor Flanagan does two things in his authoritative paper: exemplifies the types of folklore most used by American authors, and illustrates its organic employment in three novels: *Huckleberry Finn*, *The Grandissimes*, and *The Hamlet*. Much of it is a skimming of the gist of his and Professor Arthur Palmer Hudson's anthology *Folklore in American Literature*. Folklore items most obviously used in American literature are buried treasure, ghosts, witches, superstition (belief, remarkable in which is color symbolism), the tall tale, and proverbs and wisecracks.

The book is enlivened by black-and-white prints that look like woodcuts and by illustrations of some of Downs's fabulous beasts.

Austin Peay State College  
Clarksville, Tennessee

George W. Boswell

## DICTIONARIES AND INDICES

*A Dictionary of American Proverbs and Proverbial Phrases 1820-1880.* By Archer Taylor and Bartlett Jere Whiting. (Cambridge, Mass.: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1958). Pp. 418. \$9.50.

In working on a practical definition of "proverb" for this volume, the editors wrestled with all those used by former editors of such works, including the one used by Professor Taylor in his book *The Proverb* (1931), and finally concluded that the old characterization, rejected by W. C. Hazlitt, of a proverb as "short, plain, common, figurative, ancient and true," is "perhaps as good as any formal inventory" can be. In actual practice, however, they enlarged their criteria to cover liberty of personal choice and definition by inclusion.

For the original material in this collection, the editors excerpted 164 works by 87 different authors, both books and periodicals, from the years 1820 to 1880. Although the exact years framing the work are accidental to the extent that they merely coincide with the earliest and latest volume checked, the period was chosen deliberately because manifestly "There is no exaggeration in the statement that at no other time have so many American writers made proverbs so obvious an ingredient in their style." This tendency had developed from the "native urge to utilize the earthy phrases of the uneducated and semi-educated classes" and from the literary influence of Sir Walter Scott, who used proverbs perhaps more than any other English novelist because they enriched his dialect and because he delighted in them. The editors did not check all publications of the period. More periodicals were missed than books. They could not, for example, check exhaustively *The Spirit of the Times*, though they did draw on pieces originally published in that paper. But these omissions are more obvious than real, for the editors felt that in their excerpting "the law of diminishing returns was in effect."

The richness of the resulting collection surprises even the specialists in proverbs and in nineteenth-century American literature. Under "Thunder," for example, there are twenty entries; under "Woman," twenty-one; under "Horse," forty-one; under "Man," forty-two.

Equally surprising is the dearth of material under some names: there is only one entry each for such words as "damned," "flea-bite," "lazy," "stew," "shirttail." And there are many, many other single entries.

The scholarly apparatus is exhaustive for the English language. The entry from American tradition is paralleled in the Bible and in 61 other references, plus many from modern literature. No syste-

matic effort was made to cite sayings in foreign languages, though some parallels are quoted in the various reference works used.

The resulting volume, as one would expect from these distinguished authorities, is as impeccable as such a work can be. It is a highwater mark in proverbiana and in Americana. Though it might be supplemented in the future, it unquestionably can never be superseded.

University of Maryland  
College Park, Maryland

Ray B. Browne

*An Analytical Index to the Journal of American Folklore.* Tristram P. Coffin. (Philadelphia: The American Folklore Society, 1958.) Pp. xi + 384. \$6.00.

Here is another valuable reference tool for the American folklorist. Like some of the others, Haywood's giant Bibliography and the Standard Dictionary, it has imperfections, but performs an indispensable service. The Index opens up the storehouse of articles, texts, notes and reviews accumulating in the *Journal* since 1888. Only three editors held sway for three-fifths of this long period: William Wells Newell, editor for the first twelve amateurish years; and Franz Boas and his student Ruth Benedict, who from 1908 to 1939 gave *JAF* its strongly anthropological and American Indian tinge.

Coffin calls this an "experimental" index, preparatory to a definitive one upon completion of the seventy-fifth volume of the *Journal*, which will incorporate useful criticisms or suggestions now advanced. Commendably he has sought to pry open the contents of the *Journal* from as many avenues as possible. There are divisions by themes and branches of folklore, and by nationality and ethnic groups. Two elaborate sub-indexes list folksongs by titles and "first significant lines," and arrange folktales loosely along the outlines of the Motif-Index, without the motif numbers; tale-types are listed in an introductory table. Here X-67 gets into trouble, since the ballad specialist would like a finding-list correlated with Child-Coffin-Laws, and the tale specialist asks for a full rendering of the Aarne-Thompson tale-types. As it now stands, X-67 falls between two stools, since it has moved considerably beyond the subject-author-title index to *JAF* issued in 1930, covering the first forty volumes, but has not accomplished the herculean task of integration with the existing folklore indexes.

For instance, within two pages of the Index (280-281) appear short titles for some of the commonest American tall tales, all represented in the Baughman and Thompson Motif-Indexes. These include

the breathing tree full of coon (X1116), the split dog (X1215.11), the lazy man who refuses unshelled popcorn (W111.5.10.1), the popped corn mistaken for snow (X1633.1), the shot from the bent gun (X1122.3), the split limb that closes over roosting birds (Type 1890, X1124.3.1), the hunted animal turned inside out (X1124.2). Coffin eschews Motifs (though Type 1890, "The Wonderful Hunt," best known of American yarns, is not indicated), with sufficient reason. However, what we have here are tale-types with motif-numbers, well known to American collectors, and the user of X-67 must then turn to the Motif-Index for full identification. What solution is possible for X-75? Perhaps Coffin and Baughman in consultation might decide on a limited group of the most popular English and American tales—such as Baughman has already drawn up—which should be identified by Motif numbers.

The problem really lies with the *Journal* itself, which needs to maintain its own standards of index documentation in the articles it currently accepts. But here again the burden, shifted from indexer to editor, may be shifted back still further to the contributors. The fact is that there are even yet too few professional folklorists at home with the indexes to fill the pages of the *Journal*. In his introduction Coffin laments the amount of polished up texts that have sneaked into *JAF*.

On the bright side there lie all manner of buried riches in the seventy volumes which X-67 will help bring to light. James Russell Lowell is one of the great names to be found among the *Journal* authors, with a communication on "Maine Nursery Rhymes" in 1891, sent in shortly before he died. Here is the controversial Owen Lattimore in 1933 with tales from Manchuria. The early and prolific popularizer of American legends, Charles M. Skinner, donated one French-Canadian legend gratis to the *Journal*, "The Three Wishes," in 1906. There is an eloquent silence following the name of Fletcher S. Bassett, organizer of the Chicago Folk-Lore Society and foe of the American Folklore Society, whose sole entry in the *Journal* is his obituary in 1893. Two pioneer international folklorists, too little honored today, Charles Godfrey Leland and Jeremiah Curtin, wrote for the *Journal*. Who wins the prize for quantity? It must be split among the first two editors, William W. Newell, with 73 articles and 54 reviews, and Alexander F. Chamberlain, who is the eight years of his tenure disbursed most of his 56 articles and notes and 127 reviews. May subsequent editors prove more restrained!

On the mechanical side, the *Index* suffers from the photo-offset process of composition. Topics and subtopics are hard to distinguish,



and the lack of running heads is a serious inconvenience for the user thumbing through successive pages of a sub-heading. The *Index* contains too high a percentage of small misprints. Coffin has a great predilection in his captions for "etc.", which should be discarded.

In this trial run of the *Index*, readers and consulters can determine its strengths and weaknesses and relay their opinions to the indexer. Folklore study increasingly depends upon indexes as the tools of its trade, and this ambitious attempt to extract and classify the meaningful elements in the *Journal* deserves all possible support and cooperation.

Indiana University  
Bloomington, Indiana

Richard M. Dorson

#### A REPRINT

*An Apache Campaign in the Sierra Madre.* By John G. Bourke. (New York: Chas. Scribner's Sons, 1st edition: 1886, 2nd edition, 1958). Pp. 228. \$2.75.

Captain John Gregory Bourke, West Point Class of 1869, holds the distinction of being the only graduate to have earned the Medal of Honor before entering as a cadet. Having served with such distinction as a teen-aged cavalryman during the Civil War, after West Point Bourke continued his military career as a lifelong member of the 3rd U.S. Cavalry. Fortunately for Bourke's own interests and for his future readers, as a young lieutenant he became an aide-de-camp to the best of all the Indian fighters, General George Crook, from which vantage point he was able to engage in the Apache and Sioux Campaigns as participant, staff member, and recorder. General Crook leaned heavily upon his intelligent and literary aide to keep a running journal of events in order to prepare the ever-present reports to Washington. But Bourke with a remarkably keen, inquisitive, and humanistic mind, combined his personal observations with the factual account to produce one of the truly brilliant and trustworthy accounts of the fascinating era marking the end of the Indian Wars.

The recently re-published *An Apache Campaign in the Sierra Madre* helps illuminate the gap which Bourke glossed over in his much read *On the Border with Crook*—the campaign against Geronimo from 6 April to 26 June 1883. *An Apache Campaign* "illuminates the gap" in that Bourke had sufficient room in the little volume to allow full play for his acute observations of the baked lowlands, the timbered mountain strongholds, the soldiers and the Apaches they pursued,



the Indian scouts, the campfires, the jokes, the clothing, the bed-ragged Mexican towns, the mule-killing trails along knife-edged ridges, and even of an all-male dance in a Mexican saloon which ended only when the dancers threw the saxophone player through the bass drum. Since the book is essentially an abbreviated transcription of Bourke's personal journals, faithfully recorded by firelight after each day's arduous march, the book still has the immediacy of the times, never falling into the pitfalls of the old soldier's reminiscing, bombast, and bickering. A warmly humorous and humane man, Bourke understood the Indians' temperament and was outraged by their flagrant mistreatment. At the same time, his duty as a soldier and his ability to tell a good Indian from a bad one enabled him to keep an objective point of view at a time when hatreds ran hot. This depth of understanding and perspective account for Bourke's constantly growing popularity.

Bourke makes this single campaign an independent unit of writing by sketches in the background of the Apache struggle and of the beginnings of the Geronimo saga. The bold stroke by only fifty soldiers and two hundred Apache scouts into the mountains of Mexico after the Chiricahuas in their "impregnable" stronghold leads more to the disheartening of the renegades at the sight of their own tribesmen in pursuit than to heavy fighting. Tacticians should make note of General Crook's careful planning of logistical support, his use of Indian scouts against their own, his gaining of trust from the Indians, and perhaps most important, his deliberately cutting himself off from the harassing communications from Washington—alas, impossible today.

The distinguished J. Frank Dobie has further honored John Gregory Bourke by writing an appreciative and humorous introduction which will do much to elevate the memory of Bourke and to give him the credit which did not come from the Army he loved. Speaking of *On the Border with Crook* in conjunction with *An Apache Campaign in the Sierra Madre*, Dobie says: "This remains one of the dozen or maybe half-dozen most illuminating and most readable interpretations of the Southwest of pioneer days yet published." And I must echo yet another author, Ross Santee, who has said what needs to be said about John Gregory Bourke: "... everything that Bourke wrote is worth reading. Bourke not only knew the Apaches, he wrote as poets should."

Quantico, Virginia

Captain Charles M. Adams

## THE FOLKTALE

*The Book of Negro Folklore.* Edited by Langston Hughes and Arna Bontemps (New York: Dodd, Mead & Company, 1958), pp. xv + 624. \$6.50.

Most of the *real* folklore in this "treasury" is located in the 108 tales (of animals, slavery days, preachers and religion, ghosts, and social problems); and eighty-six songs (spirituals, blues, work and game songs); and the sixty-four rhymes (relating mainly to animals and pastimes).

In addition there are this-and-thats, traditional and otherwise, sketching lightly many other aspects of Negro life. Hoodoo is rather vividly presented, but the less exciting but more meaningful workaday superstitions are relatively ignored. Witches receive mention, but not riddles. There are a number of proverbs ("Hit's a mighty deaf field hand dat don't year de dinner ho'n") and aphorisms ("Buyin' on credit is robbin' next year's crop"), and revealing items on the life of the levee roustabouts and on traditional street cries.

The whimsical imagination of the Negro bubbles through Harlem jive (where an aged person becomes a "creaker") and enlivens many unattractive situations. Of one old woman it was said, "She's so ugly she can't die. I reckon she'll just ugly away." There are likewise shrewd sociological observations. One old sister advises her daughters, "Don't trust mens/But keep your feet flat/Flat upon de groun'." Or again, "The colored race is the best thermometer of how things is going, because when white folks feel good we know it, and when white folks feel bad, we know it, too—even before they do—their appetites fall off."

The general reader will enjoy the book but the serious folklorist will find several points of criticism. For one thing, it contains much that is not true folklore in the sense of anonymous material, orally transmitted. There is some justification for including certain prayers and testimonials as folklore, since many of the include traditional clichés, but the same can scarcely be said of excerpts from Father Divine's letters, or of the famous sermon, "De Sun Do Move," by John J. Jasper.

Thomas A. Dorsey's "Take my Hand, Precious Lord" is not a true folksong, in spite of his folk background, nor is Zilner Randolph's "Ole Man Mose is Dead." It is ridiculous to label Bean and Long's "I Ain't Gonna be no Topsy," as a "song in the folk manner," when it begins.

Can't you see the tint of Bergman in me,  
The Cornell approach to dramatic ecstasy . . .

The biographical accounts of such jazz folk as Jelly Roll Morton or Joe Oliver are simply not folklore—nor is Paul Lawrence Dunbar's "When Malindy Sings" or Langston Hughes "Simple on Military Integration."

Academically the book suffers from loose organization and the lack of an index. There is a cursory list of general sources at the beginning, but it requires a great deal of digging to discover who contributed what and to sift the folk from the literary. There is, of course, a considerable mixture of styles and of dialects.

The book is significant however in that it is indicative of a growing interest of the Negro in his own folklore. Besides a reasonable sampling of standard white authors there is included an even larger assortment of such Negro writers as Zora Neal Hurston, St. Clair Drake, Horace R. Cayton, Thomas W. Talley, J. Mason Brewer, Sterling A. Brown, Richard Wright, James Weldon Johnson, and Anne Petry.

Western Reserve University  
Cleveland, Ohio

Newbell N. Puckett

*Tales from the Cloud Walking Country.* Ed. by Marie Campbell, ill. by Clare Leighton. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1958), pp. 270., notes, bibliography. \$4.50.

*Sticks in the Knapsack and Other Ozark Folk Tales.* Ed. by Vance Randolph, notes by Ernest Baughman, illustrated by Glen Rounds. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1958). Pp. 171, bibliography. \$3.75.

Again two volumes of folktales by university presses are a good omen for folklore. Two excellently done volumes by two trained folklorists, gathering material from white populations of similar regions, are strong evidence that the harvest is here.

Since this is the fifth volume of tales by Randolph, little more that statistics need be given. The same inevitable storytelling style sustains the ninety-six tales and anecdotes. The same promise from that author that "Not one of the stories in this book is a verbatim transcript, but they are all pretty close to the mark," wrinkles my face with a waggish smile, because I feel that the pruning Randolph gives tales makes them ring true without verbally proving it too much. And any collector who has not blotted a line can throw the first stone. I thought Randolph's last-to-this collection, *The Talking Turtle*, was spreading them rather thin, but here is another with *Märchen*,

traditional jests and frontier anecdotes. His volumes are about our only printed lore for adult reading.

Now, since this is the first by Miss Campbell of a projected five volumes, it deserves more detailed comment. Here are seventy-eight stories (mostly *Märchen*), carefully transcribed, perhaps a bit pruned and enriched by a beautiful ear-charming mountain idiom. This much is usual and expected of the field worker. But more is added. These tales were told by six performers whose offerings are preceded by a rather graphic sketch of their homes and habits. Aunt Lizabeth Fields lives and wheezes on the page as granny-woman and friend in need. She rides her nag over the hills and dales gathering herbs, attending funerals, sucking on her clay pipe while she counsels the young against smoking and dancing. We learn of her store of "ballets" and tales and then we hear the tales authentically from her lips. The other five performers are likewise introduced before telling their tales.

This to me is in the true tradition of the greatest folklorists, as J. F. Campbell of the Scottish Highlands and Douglas Hyde of Ireland. The false folklorist goes out and wheedles antiques and remains for some selfish purpose. The true folklorist lives with the folk long enough to understand and then he shares them and their folkways with others. Miss Campbell has made this outstanding beginning with her first volume.

The seventy-eight tales are virtually all traditional, but not all of northern Europe. One performer, Big Nelt, had lived for a time with an Irishman and learned several Irish hero tales. These have almost no circulation in the Kentucky mountains. I have heard a few—of Cuchulain and Finn—but felt sure they had been read in this country. Many other texts in the volume are close to print. The beauty is that they have been so thoroughly adapted to the region by what I like to call a living tradition. We may look with relish for the next volumes after which we will be more able to assess Miss Campbell's fine collection.

Morehead State College  
Morehead, Kentucky

Leonard Roberts

*The People of the Twilight.* By Diamond Jenness. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1959). Pp. vii + 251, illustrated. \$1.50.

The people of the twilight are the Esquimos of the Coronation Gulf region with whom Diamond Jenness lived, traveled, hunted, feasted, and starved for almost two years. Mr. Jenness writes of these people with an affection that avoids sentimentality and with an

understanding that bespeaks the trained eye of the anthropologist and the sensitivity of a warm human being. The author was the ethnologist with the Canada Arctic Expedition that explored and studied the Coronation Gulf area and its people during the years 1913-16. He resolved to stay and to move with an Esquimo family for a sufficiently long time to learn the rhythm and exertions of every period of the year. This account of his experiences and observations was first published in 1928. The University of Chicago Press has done a service by reissuing it now as one of its moderately priced Phoenix Books. To this new edition Mr. Jenness, who retired in 1948 from the post of Chief of the Division of Anthropology of the Canadian National Museum after twenty-two years of service, contributes an epilogue.

This book is not a standard ethnography, organized in terms of the usual topical headings such as economy, social organization, religion, and the like. The organizational principle is a temporal one. Culturally significant events are described as they were encountered. Eventually, in context, we become acquainted with all aspects of the food quest and the technology that supports it, the seasonal wanderings and formation and dissolution of temporary communities, the social customs, and the shamanistic performances. So flowing and absorbing is the narrative that one is scarcely conscious of the full anthropological lesson he has learned.

Diamond Jenness' account is the record of men living under stress. In spite of their remarkable adaptation to the environment the Esquimos with whom he lived were constantly in danger. A thaw was often as menacing to them as a blinding snow storm. No period of the year was free from want. The harshness of the life was often reflected in the tensions between people. Of the ebb and flow of the human spirit in these circumstances the author writes with objectivity and humor. He was accused of murder through supernatural means and narrowly averted disaster. His goods were more than once pilfered. But when he was sick his starving Esquimo companions refused to share the food that he needed to regain strength. Jenness witnessed a hungry and unsuccessful Esquimo hunter scold the starving members of his group for saving for him what he considered to be an unduly large portion of their remaining stock of food. This book reminds us once more that there is no danger or disaster that man cannot match with courage and kindness.

*Cornell University  
Ithaca, New York*

Morris E. Opler

*The Inland Whale.* By Theodora Kroeber, with a Foreword by Oliver LaFarge. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1959). Pp. 205, notes and bibliography. \$4.50.

This collection of stories from the Indians of California is a "re-telling," a "popularization" of nine texts which have either been previously published in the "learned journals" or are yet in unpublished MSS. It is "made for the adult reader who has a general interest in comparative literature, but not in technical folklore or linguistics as such." Yet the book is, for all this, an excellent one for folklorists. Mrs. Kroeber uses the authentic material as a starting point, but in her reworking, "the focus of interest changes." Her primary aim has been "to transmit . . . the sense of poetry and drama which these tales held for their own people." Accordingly, she has expunged "episodes which are intractable to transmutation" and has made "explicit many things which the native listener would not need to have included, because they would be commonplace to him."

The stories are all either about women or have a woman for a central character. Mrs. Kroeber limits her selection to "woman" tales, because "It seemed best to have a unifying *locus* since the possible choice is various and wide . . ." In addition, the stories are illustrations of genre variations in oral literature, which resemble sophisticated literature. "One points toward the novel form, one to the tragic drama. One suggests a morality tale, one a masque fantasy. One prefigures the lyric, one the idyll, and one the epic form. There is a romance and there is an Orpheus-like myth."

A single, brief comparative example of the author's "retelling" a source will make clear the changes she has made. The fifth text is called "Love Charm."

*It is early morning and a young girl stands by the side of the trail, waiting, with downcast eyes. A young man comes along the trail and passes her. She does not move until he is past. Then she follows his going with her eyes and she says:*

*All during the night I dream of him  
And as soon as it is daylight  
I get up and dress  
and slip out and wait for him  
To see if perhaps he will come by.  
And when at last I see him coming toward me  
My heart pounds  
And I am afraid to look at him.  
I do not raise my eyes.  
He passes close by me  
And sometimes he gives me a flower*



*He has picked  
 Or a sweet grass he has twisted  
 Into a bracelet  
 And I wear the flower  
 Even when it is wilted.  
 And I wear the bracelet  
 Until it falls to pieces.  
 But when he is gone again  
 I raise my eyes  
 And look at him.  
 And I say this charm while I look at him  
 So that he must come back to me.*

I say:

*Suwa!  
 May you turn back  
 And look at me!  
 May you see only me  
 Wherever you look!  
 May you think about me  
 All through the day and night!  
 May you come here to me every day!  
 May you love me as I love you!*

*I say this and I cry to myself. I cry and cry.* (pp. 87-88).

The source for this lyric is found in Edward Sapir, "Yana Texts," *Univ. of California. Publs. in Amer. Arch. and Ethnol.* IX (1910), 197-98, "Spell said by a girl desirous of getting a husband."

*Suwa! May you think about me to yourself! May you turn back to look! Would that I might stand before his face! I just cry to myself. Would that I might see him every day! I do just as you do! [ed. note: The implication is not clear. Perhaps it means 'May you love me as I love you']. Sometimes I dream of him, and I rise when it is daylight, and I look about. Now as I see him, my heart flutters. I look at him without raising my eyes. He gives me trinkets, and I take them and I wear them for some time, until they are worn out.*

The reader can see the extent of Mrs. Kroeber's reworking. The other stories in the book, with the exception of the familiar "Loon Woman" and the Orpheus-like story, "The Man's Wife," are, like the text above, "single in origin, and without variants" (p. 157). The former two stories have been retold by collating a variety of published texts. The rest are literary treatments of unique texts.

The notes at the back of the book (53 pp.) are excellent and worth its price or more. Not only does the author give the known history and distribution for each tale, but her concern is always with its possible, larger "literary" implications. As LaFarge says in his Foreword, she sees the stories "not as a discrete phenomena relating



[only] to the American Indian, but as belonging in the long universal stream of emergent literature." For example, the seven unique texts lead Mrs. Kroeber to conclude: "that the budding creative element in oral literature may well lie within the unique tale, invented by a single person, and tangential to the great, conventionalized, and channelled main stream of a people's literary *corpus* and tradition. The devices, patterns, and structure which I find in these brief stories suggest a germinal prefiguring of a written and sophisticated literature . . . oral literature can be read to discover whatever it contains of prehistory in the morphology of literature. . . ." Finally, Mrs. Kroeber makes what seems to be a significant observation about an essential feature of sophisticated literature. "Oralness is a goal of much that is written. Songs are to be sung, poetry is to be recited, plays are to be acted, stories are to be read aloud." The obvious implication is that when dealing with the traditional unwritten story, poem, etc., the student is faced with one of the central elements of all literature—perhaps the essence of literary art itself.

University of Kansas  
Lawrence, Kansas

Butler Waugh

#### FOLKSONG AND BALLADRY

*Folk Blues.* Edited and arranged with an introduction by Jerry Silverman. (New York: The MacMillan Co., 1958). Pp. 297, including guitar chord chart, bibliography, discography, and index of titles and first lines. \$6.95.

Jerry Silverman has gotten together for the lay collector, the campus folk singer, and the coffee-house balladeer one hundred and ten songs under the imposing title of *Folk Blues*. The author says his book is meant to be used and, for those who will use it, he has done a great service. From such diverse "informants" as Blind Lemon Jefferson, Woody Guthrie, Jelly Roll Morton, Huddie Ledbetter, John Jacob Niles, Jimmie Rodgers, Mamie Desdoumes, Anon, and his own imagination, Mr. Silverman has compiled "a collection of representative folk blues." Surely all interested in singing American folk songs will be eager to find in one volume tunes and texts for "Mule Skinner Blues," "Get Thee Behind Me, Satan," "New York Town," "Bourgeois Blues," "Rabbit-foot Blues," and "Brakeman's Blues," as well as a whole section of words for various talking blues. Many of the songs have not before appeared in print and not a few are available only on phonograph records that are difficult, if not

impossible, to obtain. Such is the scope of Mr. Silverman's collection and for it he deserves the friends his song book is certain to win.

However, this is more than a song book. It includes a twenty-six page introduction from which there arises much confusion of definition and purpose.

In these twenty-six pages, the author acknowledges the difficulty experienced and aid received in collecting the songs. He presents short sketches of several blues singers. Then in a stream-of-consciousness-writing passage, he shows the reader how to "think, speak and react in terms of the 'blues folk' themselves." This is as quaint as it is clever but causes one to wonder just what is involved in singing "folk blues." Having dispensed with the unwashed mentality, Mr. Silverman embarks on a highly technical discussion of Negro blues musicology, which in thoroughness is matched only by the poverty of material on the origin of the song texts. The general intention of the book makes the musicological exposition appear pretentious and out of place, especially as the attempt to correlate Negro blues to "white" blues and both in turn to "folk blues" is little more than a string of clichés about cowboys yelping across the plains, rollicking banjo tunes, and share-croppers singing to the old mule. Finally the author, returning to his original aim, encourages his readers to get in there and "have fun."

The introduction does not indicate that Mr. Silverman comprehends the difference between singing the blues and singing about the social injustice that prompted the blues singing. Even more importantly, he fails to discern that both are far removed from "living, breathing, *singing* folk art" in this country today.

If one sincerely tried to follow Mr. Silverman's final exhortation—"Laugh with Thelma and cry with Alberta . . . and feel good all over when you've 'left Satan far behind'"—he will find the chords not difficult and the songs fun to sing. But those who can afford this book are well-fed, socially secure, and very middle-class. Thinking and reacting in the terms of blues folk, even singing the folk blues, cannot make them less so, as Mr. Silverman no doubt well known. It is questionable even that they will be able to keep the blues, folk or otherwise, alive for their treatment of the songs must be superficial, as in the author's, and without the fire and drive which gave the songs their original vitality.

In that sense *Folk Blues* fails because the author tries to provide more than just a song book for which there was a need.

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*"With His Pistol in His Hand": A Border Ballad and Its Hero.*  
By Americo Paredes. (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1959).  
Pp. 262, bibliography, index. \$5.00.

This book is a very good book—interesting, informative, scholarly, and completely absorbing. It tells the story of a Mexican-American folksong, "El Corrido de Gregorio Cortez," and its hero. At the same time, it looks steadily and uncompromisingly at the Texas West of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in a way few studies have done.

Gregorio Cortez was an undistinguished Mexican ranchhand. On June 12, 1901, at his farm ten miles west of Kenedy, Texas, he killed Sheriff Brack Morris during a misunderstanding brought on by a Deputy's inability to interpret properly. Scared by "Gringo justice" and the trigger-happy reputation of the Texas Rangers, he fled, leaving a wounded brother and his family behind. On June 22, he was captured near the border. During the ten days, he had walked and ridden over 500 miles eluding posse after posse, run the price on his head to \$1000, shot at least one other lawman, and been deceived by at least one friend and one member of his family. After his capture, he was taken to San Antonio, where he became the center of trials and legal maneuverings that continued for twelve years. His resourcefulness, nerve, charm, and the symbolic quality of his cause so captivated his fellow Mexicans, as well as a good many Americans, that his adventure became a legend.

Dr. Paredes' book is divided into two parts: the study of the legend itself and the study of the *corrido*. The first part, which deals not only with Cortez and the facts of his life, but also with the problems of the downtrodden group of which he was a member, is the most fascinating. In these days of television romance and Western glorification, it is exciting to read a documented study of the vain-glorious nature of the real Texan, of his cruelties, his cowardice, and the inefficiency of his beloved Rangers. Dr. Paredes minces no words as he tells of the plight of Cortez and the tragedy it brought to his family and many others. And while the author spends little time defending the Gringo point of view, the reader comes away from the book pretty well convinced there is little more right on the Gringo side than there is with the rulers in most tyrannies.

Part II, which is a treatment of the Border *corrido* and the variants of the Cortez song, moves a bit slowly after the chase and trials of Part I. However, once the reader adjusts to being back in the library, he realizes he has found in Part II what amounts to a handbook for a ballad type that little is known about. The author

discusses the development of the type, its language, versification, style, and conventions, and in the course of it all argues convincingly that these *corridos* work steadily toward one form, of which 'Gregorio Cortez' is a prime example": a tale of Border conflict, in which a downtrodden man fights for his rights "with his pistol in his hand." It is a shame that the book does not go on to relate the Border *corrido* to the Greater Mexican heroic *corrido*, a study that it continually suggests should be made, and it is hoped Dr. Paredes will pursue his thinking along such lines in the near future.

In a strange way, this book is a combination of the Blair-Meine *Half Horse, Half Alligator*, with which it shares much of its technique; of Alan Lomax's *Mr. Jelly Roll*, which is also as interested in the ethnic group as it is in the hero; and of the Chappell and Guy Johnson studies of the "John Henry" ballad. It is as good as any of these classics, in technique, competence, and readability. It is something any folklorist (and his family) will want to read, and it should satisfy the whole discipline from the antiquarian to the indexer.

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## FROM THE ARCHIVES

SOME INDIANA PLACE-NAME LEGENDS

Submitted by JAN BRUNVAND

The article by Virgil J. Vogel on place-name legends from Illinois in the last issue of *Midwest Folklore* prompted a search of the Indiana University Folklore Archives for examples of similar folk etymologies for place names of the Hoosier state. It was found that this category of folklore is rather poorly represented in the Archives. The following group of place-name legends almost exhausts the findings and covers only a miscellaneous scattering of Indiana names. It is printed in the hope that readers will collect and send in place-name legends from other parts of the state. Such material would be deposited in the Archives in the name of the donator and eventually published in *Midwest Folklore*.

The legends are given essentially in the language of the informants and edited only by shortening some texts. The collectors were Indiana University undergraduate students enrolled in folklore courses for the past five years; informants' names and addresses are on record

in the Archives. (The "Shave Town" legend was found in the W.P.A. folklore collection—part of the Archives—and bears the date 1936). No attempt was made to verify the stories or to seek parallels outside of the Archives.

The State of Indiana is rich in unusual and interesting place names, as a glance at any map or a tour through the countryside will show. One would expect to find folk explanations for such names (to take a few at random) as Aix, Alto, Ari, Bobo, Buddha, Cuzco, Disko, Free, Goshen, Heat, Ijamsville, Kokomo, Longnecker, Mauzy, Modoc, Numa, Poneto, Stone Head, Stony Lonesome, Young America and Zipp. The Archives would be greatly enriched by legends explaining these or any other Indiana place names, and readers' contributions will be gratefully received. Materials should be sent to Mr. Jan Brunvand, Indiana University Folklore Archives, Library 41, Bloomington, Indiana. Any conditions relating to the use of these contributions by scholars should be stated.

*Bean Blossom Creek* (Brown and Monroe Counties). A pioneer family was traveling through the county and came to a place where they could ford the stream. They shelled some beans in preparation for their meal and some of these beans were dropped on the ground. After the meal, the family moved on downstream and didn't return to the original area for some weeks. Then they found their spilled beans had sprouted and were in blossom. They named it Bean Blossom Creek. (Variant: One summer a heavy rain caused the stream to rise out of its banks and flood the settlers' gardens. The water was covered with uprooted bean plants in blossom.)

*Birdseye* (Dubois County). When one of the founders of the town suggested a name for it, another one commented "That's a birds-eye!" So that's what they called it. (Variant: The town was named for a Methodist minister whose name was Birdseye.)

*Bloomington* (Monroe County). The settlers arrived in the spring and found a profusion of wild flowers blooming. They called the site "Blooming-town." In time it was shortened to Bloomington. (Variant: The settlement was named for John Bloom, prominent in the founding and growth of the city.)

*French Lick* (Orange County). The French came to trade with the Indians here near where the wild animals used to come to lick at the mineral springs; hence, the name French Lick was chosen.

*Gnawbone* (Brown County). Some early settlers of the town were once snowed in. When rescuers arrived, they found the people

gnawing on old bones. (Variant: from "Roundin' the Square," *Daily Herald Telephone*, Bloomington, February 1, 1960, page 1: "Would anyone deliberately name a town Gnawbone: Naw, says one skeptical Roundin' reader, who has another theory on the origin of the name. There were French settlers around that part of the country, he says, and he bets the name was originally Narbonne. With a Hoosier twang, 'Narbonne,' began to sound like 'gnawbone'—and hence the name.")

*Inwood* (Marshall County). The name was originally Pearson, in honor of Ezra G. Pearson who laid out the village. The railroaders wanted a shorter name and picked Inwood because they found themselves "in the woods" there.

*Jack's Defeat Creek* (Monroe County). There was a pioneer settler by the name of Jack Storm. One day he decided to come into the settlement to transact some business. While he was on his way clouds came up and there was a heavy cloudburst. By the time he came to the stream, the water was up to the banks and running swiftly. Imprudently, he decided to try to cross. He headed his team and wagon into the flooding stream and the inevitable happened; his wagon was overturned and his team drowned. Jack managed to save himself, and when the story reached his friends and neighbors, they promptly named the stream "Jack's Defeat." (Variant: Jack Storm was going courting when he tried to cross the swollen creek on horseback. The delay allowed his rival to win the girl and Jack named the stream himself. Another version says that Jack Storm lost time searching for a boat while his rival crossed on horseback.)

*Logansport* (Cass County). It was suggested that the town be Named for Chief Logan, a young Shawnee who lost his life leading settlers to safety during the War of 1812. Some of the residents, however, thought that the name "Logan" was too short. A shooting match was held and the winner was to choose the name himself. Colonel John Duret, a local marksman, won and he named it Logansport.)

*Maumee River* (Fort Wayne). When the Indians used to go up and down the river in their canoes, their babies would lie on the bank and cry "Maw-mee!" The settlers heard that and named the river Maumee.

*Muckshaw Lake* (Marshall County). The lake is full of muck and it is said that a duck hunter sinking into it would exclaim "Oh, pshaw!"



*"Possum Trot"* (Nickname for Walnut, in Marshall County). This is said to be an early nickname for Walnut. It is supposed to refer to the large numbers of Opossums once found there.

*"Shave Town"* (Nickname for Geetingsville, Clinton County). A farmer in the town bought a fine-looking horse only to find out when he got it home that it balked at doing any kind of work. He clipped and shaved all the places where a harness would rub and re-sold the horse as a hard-worker. When news of the trick got out, the town received its nickname.

*South Milford* (Lagrange County). A large saw mill was located northeast of the settlers' homes. They used to say that they lived "south of the mill and the ford." Later the name became South Milford.

*Vinegar Hill* (Ellettsville, Monroe County). One of the early merchants was hauling a large barrel of vinegar up the highest hill in town. Just as he reached the top, his wagon hit a bump in the road and the barrel was bounced out; it broke when it hit the ground. The vinegar ran down the street into the town and the people started calling it Vinegar Hill. (Variant: There was a large apple orchard on top of the hill. In the autumn the apples were allowed to fall to the ground and rot. The rotting apples smelled like sour vinegar.)

*Winslow* (Pike County). Old Mr. Hathaway owned most of the land in the vicinity, but several other families thought they should give a name to the settlement. Mr. Hathaway said that the town should be named for the first child born there; since his son's wife was expecting shortly, it became their privilege to name the baby and the town. So Winslow was named for Winslow Hathaway.



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